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THE GOD OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

THE GOD OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

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TO

HENRY PRESERVED SMITH

LOVER OF TRUTH

BELOVED OF HIS COLLEAGUES

PREFACE

This volume contains the Nathaniel William Taylor Lectures given before the Divinity School of Yale University in October, 1922. The lectures are printed substantially as they were delivered, but changes and additions have been freely made in preparing them for the press.

My colleague, Professor Frame, has read the manuscript with his accustomed self-denying care and patience, and to his penetrating criticism the book owes much.

New York,
November 1, 1923.

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THE GOD OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

LECTURE I

THE GOD OF JESUS AND OF PAUL

THIS course of lectures upon the God of the early Christians is intended to be exclusively historical, not dogmatic or philosophical. It is not my purpose to present my own idea of God or to attempt to construct a theism for the modern age in which we live, or to suggest what I think the Christian doctrine of God should be, but only to set out as clearly and dispassionately as I can the views of God that were current in the earliest generations of the Christian church. The development of the Christian idea of God has interested me for a long time, and I thought at first of using the opportunity offered by these lectures to trace that development, at least in brief outline, through the centuries. But when I essayed the task I found that the subject was too large to be satisfactorily compressed within the compass of a course of four lectures, and it seemed better worth while to confine myself to a single period within which I might hope to deal with the

theme with at least some degree of thoroughness. Even of this circumscribed field I can offer no complete or adequate treatment in these lectures. I have had to confine myself narrowly to certain aspects of the matter, chosen because they serve to illustrate the general situation.

The subject of the course is the God of the early Christians, and as Jesus, though our Christianity roots itself in him, remained a Jew to the end, I might perhaps fairly be excused if I were to omit all reference to his idea of God. But I have thought it important to give a brief summary of what he has to say about God, both because his words had influence with his followers, though less than might have been expected, and also because in some respects they seem to me to have been seriously misinterpreted, as, for instance, in the first chapter of my own book on the Apostolic Age. Since that volume was published my understanding of Jesus' attitude on certain matters has undergone a radical change, and I am glad to have this opportunity of presenting his thought about God more fully and, as I believe, more justly.

I shall confine myself to the Synoptic Jesus, and shall base what I have to say upon his utterances recorded in the first three Gospels, leaving the Gospel of John for separate treatment. Earlier documents underlie the Synoptic Gospels, and it may seem out of place to make any statements about Jesus' idea of God, except

upon the basis of such documents. As a matter of fact, I have worked the whole subject over in the light of the material which, it seems to me, may fairly be assigned to the original sources, and I was at first inclined to confine myself to this. But in the present state of Gospel criticism to justify my selection of material would require an elaborate critical discussion wholly out of place in this brief course, whose main interest lies elsewhere. It seems, therefore, the fairer way to use the material as it is given in the Synoptic Gospels, taking pains, however, to distinguish when necessary between the more and the less well-attested utterances. As it happens, the picture of God thus reached, while considerably richer in details, is essentially the same as if drawn from the earlier documents alone.

Jesus was a devout and loyal Jew, and the God whom he worshipped was the God of his people Israel—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was not a theologian or a philosopher, and he indulged in no speculations touching the nature and character of God. So far as we can judge from the Synoptic Gospels and from his attitude reflected there, he did not regard it as his mission to promulgate a new God or to teach new ideas about God, but rather to summon his fellows to live as God—his God and theirs—would have them live.

To him as to the Jews in general the God of

Israel was the one and only God; the Lord of heaven and earth; the creator and ruler of the world. He is almighty and able to do anything, however impossible. He also knows everything: the hearts of men and the day and hour of the consummation. He controls the world in the most minute way; he makes the sun shine and the rain fall and the grass and the flowers grow; he feeds the sparrows; he takes care of men, nourishing and clothing them, numbering the very hairs of their heads, and fixing their destinies. He may even lead them into temptation. There is no suggestion in all this of natural laws that have to be suspended, or of a conflict between divine power and human freedom; and there is no hint that God is so far away that he is compelled to employ subordinate agents in dealing with the world and with man. All he does he does directly. Jesus' idea of God indeed is quite naïve and anthropomorphic, and there is no sign that he was troubled by any speculative problems or difficulties.

Jesus had a good deal to say about divine judgment, about gehenna and hell-fire, about weeping and gnashing of teeth, and about the outer darkness. He also pictured God as a righteous but severe judge. God is to be feared because he can destroy both soul and body in hell. He will punish not only murder but anger, not only evil deeds but evil and idle words, not only adultery but impure desires. He is hard and

austere, and he destroys his enemies. The way of life is narrow and few will find it; many will strive to enter in and not be able. Those that knock at the door after it has been shut will be turned away and cast out of the kingdom. For the devil and his angels God has prepared hell-fire, and into it will send those that fail to minister to the needy and suffering as well as all that offend and do iniquity. The unworthy sons of the kingdom, the man without a wedding garment, the unprofitable servant will be cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; the wicked servant will be cut asunder and thrown into a similar place; and from every one that hath not will be taken away even that which he hath. It is better to cut off an offending hand or foot than to have the whole body cast into everlasting fire. There is more of this in Matthew than in the other Synoptic Gospels, but there is much of it also in Luke, and it is not altogether lacking in Mark. It is evident that it must have bulked large in the sources.

In spite of his sternness and severity, the God of Jesus, as of the Jews in general, is good and gracious and merciful. It is not his will that any should perish; he goes out seeking that which is lost and rejoices over it when it is found. His goodness extends even to the wicked and unthankful, and it is just in this unmerited kindness that his perfectness consists, a per-

fectness men ought to make their own. His providential care is also emphasized, a care that makes all anxiety unnecessary on the part of the disciples.

The goodness of God suggests that he is a forgiving God who pardons the repentant and does not remember their iniquities against them; and upon this aspect of God's character it is generally assumed that Jesus laid the greatest emphasis. His gospel indeed is commonly phrased as the gospel of divine forgiveness. But as a matter of fact, so far as we can judge from the Synoptic Gospels, he said surprisingly little upon the subject. Divine forgiveness, or God's remission of sins, is referred to by Jesus only in the passage about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; in the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors"; in a quotation from the Old Testament, "lest they should turn and it should be forgiven them" (Mark 4 : 12); in Matthew's account of the last supper, where the words "shed for many unto remission of sins" are evidently a later addition; in Luke 23 : 34 ("Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do") which is wanting in many manuscripts; and in a post-resurrection utterance recorded by Luke alone: "that repentance unto remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations" (Luke 24 : 47). To these may be added the incident of the sinful

woman of whom Jesus says: "Her sins which are many are forgiven because she loved much" (Luke 7:41); the parable of the prodigal son; and the reference to the forgiveness of sins by the Son of man in Mark 2:5 ff. and parallels.[1]

Jesus did insist with emphasis upon the duty of forgiving one's fellows, but when he spoke of divine forgiveness he seems as a rule to have been interested not so much to assure his followers that God forgives sins as to warn them against presuming upon his forgiveness. Thus he says: "Verily I say unto you all sins shall be forgiven to the sons of men and the blasphemies wherewith they shall blaspheme; but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but shall be guilty of an eternal sin." [2] "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.[3] . . . For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive men not, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." [4] "And his lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that he owed. So likewise shall my

[1] In the authorized version of Luke 6:37 ἀπολύετε is wrongly translated "forgive."

[2] Mark 3:28–29 and parallels.

[3] In a Jewish prayer of the early second century one of the petitions runs: "Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned" (see Dalman, Die Worte Jesu, p. 156).

[4] Matt. 6:12, 14, 15. Cf. Luke 11:4 and Mark 11:25 which are less explicit than Matthew.

heavenly Father do unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother." [1]

Forgiveness suggests repentance, but it is worthy of notice that while Jesus speaks of repentance a few times,[2] he nowhere explicitly connects it with forgiveness except in Luke 17 : 3, 4, where he is represented as saying: "If he repent forgive him." In the parallel passage in Matthew (18 : 21) nothing is said about repentance, which is apparently an addition of Luke's own. The parable of the prodigal son, recorded only in Luke, likewise suggests the connection of forgiveness with repentance. Luke, indeed, as shown both by the Gospel and the Acts, was fond of the notion of repentance.

Jesus' attitude in the matter of forgiveness is the more remarkable because as a rule the Jews made much of forgiveness and were accustomed to insist that there was no sin so grievous it might not be pardoned if repented for, repentance being emphasized ordinarily as the one in-

[1] Matt. 18 : 34–35. Though found only in Matthew, I am inclined to assign this parable to Q.

[2] Once at the very beginning of his ministry, in Mark 1 : 15 (and the parallel in Matthew); in Matt. 11 : 20 ff. and 12 : 41 (and the parallels in Luke); in Luke 5 : 32, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," where the word repentance is wanting in the parallel passages in Mark and Matthew; in Luke 13 : 3, 5 (peculiar to Luke); in Luke 15 : 7, 10, "joy over one sinner that repenteth," where the parallel passage in Matthew says nothing of repentance; in Luke 17 : 3, 4, where the reference to repentance is also wanting in the parallel passage in Matthew; and in Luke 24 : 47, a post-resurrection utterance apparently not Jesus' own. The number of references to repentance in the well-attested words of Jesus is therefore small, perhaps three or four.

dispensable and sufficient condition of forgiveness. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). According to Abrahams,[1] no passages in Scripture are more often cited in the Rabbinic literature than this, unless it be similar utterances on forgiveness elsewhere in Isaiah, and in Hosea, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

The following Rabbinic utterances quoted by Schechter from various periods, early and late, will illustrate the general situation. "They asked wisdom, What is the punishment of the sinner? Wisdom answered, Evil pursues sinners. They asked prophecy, What is the punishment of the sinner? Prophecy answered, The soul that sinneth it shall die. They asked the Torah, What is the punishment of the sinner? Torah answered, Let him bring a guilt offering and it shall be forgiven unto him, as it is said: 'And it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.' They asked the Holy One, blessed be he, What is the punishment of the sinner? The Holy One, blessed be he, answered, Let him do repentance and it shall be forgiven unto him, as it is said, 'Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way.'"[2] Again Adam is rep-

[1] Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, chap. 19. Abrahams refers to some exceptions to the general attitude on pp. 142 f.

[2] Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 293.

resented as submitting to repentance and praying: "Lord of the world, remove my sin from me and accept my repentance so that all generations should learn that there is repentance and that thou hast accepted the repentance of those who return unto thee." [1] Similarly of the wicked King Manasseh it is said, "When he found himself during his captivity in Babel in real distress, there was no idol he failed to invoke. . . . But when he saw that they were of no help to him, he said, I remember that my father made me read, 'When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice, for the Lord thy God is a merciful God, he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee.' I will now invoke him. If he will answer me, well, if not I will declare that all Powers are alike. The angels thereupon shut the openings of heaven and said before the Holy One, blessed be he, Shall repentance avail for a man who placed an image in the very sanctuary? Then the Holy One, blessed be he, said, If I accept not his repentance, I thereby shut the door against all other penitents. He then dug for Manasseh's repentance a special passage from below the Throne of Glory (over which the angels have no control) and through this was heard Manasseh's supplication." "Thus, if a man would tell thee that God

[1] Op. cit., p. 315.

receives not the penitents, behold Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, he will bear evidence that no creature in the world ever committed before me so many wicked deeds as he did, yet in the moment of repentance I received him." [1]

Comparing Jesus' words with such utterances as these, it would seem that his concern was not so much with divine forgiveness as with human, and that he was interested chiefly to impress upon his disciples the duty of forgiving their fellows. It was not enough simply to repent, as was commonly thought; they must forgive if they would be forgiven. The same emphasis is found in Ecclesiasticus 28 : 2–4: "Forgive thy neighbor the wrong that he hath done; and then thy sins shall be pardoned when thou prayest. Man cherisheth anger against man, and doth he seek healing from the Lord? Upon a man like himself he hath no mercy, and doth he make supplication for his own sins?" [2]

As a matter of fact, the gospel of Jesus was not the gospel of divine forgiveness—that needed no special emphasis. The burden of his preaching, like that of John the Baptist, was the kingdom of God; that is, the sovereignty or rule of God, the very heart of Jewish religion and the supreme hope of pious Israelites. And as is abundantly shown, not only by the passages referred

[1] Op. cit., p. 318.

[2] For many other examples of the same attitude see Abrahams, op. cit., pp. 155 ff.

to above, but also by his sharpening of the law in the Sermon on the Mount, he demanded more than was generally demanded rather than less; he set up a higher ethical standard and insisted upon a more perfect conformity to it.[1] Like Amos, he emphasized life rather than ritual and required justice and mercy rather than sacrifice; and like him, too, he judged his generation severely and believed that it needed a thoroughgoing moral reformation. With a view thereto he was concerned less to offer men pardon than to summon them to righteousness; less to comfort than to convict of sin.

It is perhaps worth noticing in this connection that God's love is not once spoken of by Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. This is remarkable, for it is frequently referred to in the Old Testament and in Rabbinic literature. Of course this omission must not be pressed too far. As already said, according to the Synoptic Gospels Jesus spoke of God as good and kind and merciful, and emphasized his providential care, and in the parable of the prodigal son he represented his character in a most gracious light. Moreover, his summing up of the law in the Jewish confession (the Shema): "Hear, oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength," shows that he thought of God as

[1] Cf. Matt. 5 : 20.

lovable and suggests at least that God is loving as well. Still further, his own attitude toward his fellows, like the attitude he inculcated in his disciples, who were to be sons of their Father in heaven (Matt. 5 : 45) or of the Most High (Luke 6 : 35), was such as to throw light upon his interpretation of God's character, even had he said nothing about it. That he makes no specific reference to God's love in the Synoptic Gospels may therefore be a mere accident. At the same time it serves to remind us that the burden of his preaching was righteousness and judgment, a preaching entirely consonant with his own sternness and severity toward the self-righteous, the proud, the hypocritical, the uncharitable, the unmerciful, the evil-minded, the spiritually obtuse, the cowardly, the unrepentant, the avaricious and profane, and the deceivers of the innocent.[1]

Akin to the common notion that Jesus went beyond his countrymen in preaching God's love and forgiveness, and that in this lay the essence of his gospel, is the opinion that he went beyond his countrymen in emphasizing the fatherhood of God. Nothing could well be more erroneous.[2] In the Gospel of Matthew, Father is used by

[1] Cf. Matt. 7 : 5, 33; 12 : 31 ff.; 15 : 3 ff.; 18 : 6; 21 : 12; 23 : 13 ff.; Mark 7 : 6; 8 : 38; 11 : 15; Luke 10 : 15; 11 : 29; 12 : 56; 13 : 3; 17 : 2; 19 : 45; 20 : 47.

[2] I feel this the more keenly because I once shared the opinion myself (see my History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age, pp. 16 ff.), but have long recognized its incorrectness.

Jesus more often than any other word for God, but in Mark and Luke much more rarely. According to Matthew, Jesus spoke of God as Father forty-four times, according to Mark only four times, according to Luke fifteen or sixteen times, to which may be added Acts 1 : 4, 7.[1] He called him God thirty-one times, according to Matthew, the same number of times according to Mark, and sixty times according to Luke; and Lord some nine times according to Matthew, six times according to Mark, and eleven times according to Luke. Thus Father appears as the favorite name in Matthew, and God in Mark and Luke. In Harnack's tentative reconstruction of Q,[2] the word God appears on Jesus' lips more than twice as often as the word Father.

In many passages Matthew has Father when the parallel passage in Mark or Luke omits it or uses another word,[3] suggesting that the preponderance of the term in Matthew is due to the evangelist rather than his sources. That Jesus chose the term Father for the form of address in the Lord's prayer, which is given both by Matthew and Luke, and that he addressed God as Father in his prayer in Gethsemane, according to all three Gospels, may show that it

[1] The word Father for God appears in the Synoptic Gospels only on the lips of Jesus. In Matthew the phrase "Father in heaven" or "Heavenly Father" is used eighteen times, in Mark once, and in Luke once ("the Father from heaven").

[2] Sprüche und Reden Jesu, pp. 88 ff.

[3] E. g., Matt. 5 : 45; 6 : 27; 10 : 20, 29; 12 : 50; 20 : 23; 26 : 29.

was his favorite name for God, but, even so, it meant no departure on his part from the usage of his countrymen. God was very commonly called Father by the Jews of Christ's time, and was thought of as the Father not only of Israel but of the Israelites, not only of the people as a whole but of individuals as well. The personal piety of the age indeed expressed itself largely in the thought of God as Father, and Jesus simply followed the common custom of his day in employing the term.[1] That he was conscious of standing himself in a relation of peculiar intimacy with God, as Christians have always believed, and that out of it came his assurance and his extraordinary religious insight may well be, but the proof of it is to be found rather in his general attitude than in his use of the word Father, or even of the phrase "my Father."[2]

[1] See Dalman, Die Worte Jesu, pp. 150 ff., and Moore, History of Religions, vol. II, p. 74. Dalman even doubts, in view of the common use of the word Father and the rare use of the word God by the Jews of Christ's time, whether the evangelists are right in frequently putting the latter word in Jesus' mouth, and whether in doing so they have not substituted a form of speech more familiar to the Greeks and Hellenists (p. 161); that is, if Jesus did make frequent use of the word Father, as Dalman thinks he did, he was doing only what his Jewish contemporaries were doing.

[2] The phrase "my Father," which occurs some sixteen times in Matthew, is not found in Mark and only four times in Luke, once in connection with Jesus' boyhood visit to Jerusalem (2 : 49), once in a post-resurrection utterance (24 : 49), once in a sentence (22 : 29) that has no parallel in Matthew or Mark, and once (10 : 22) in a logion whose authenticity is doubtful on other grounds (see p. 29). In these circumstances not much weight can be laid upon the use of the phrase.

The word Father as used by the Jews commonly involved affection, but not merely affection. It involved also sovereignty and authority, sometimes that alone.[1] It naturally suggested God's care for his people and their answering love and obedience, but often it seems to have been used as any other word might have been, with no thought of a special significance attaching to it. As one of the common names for God, it might easily be so used. Jesus employed it indifferently in speaking of God's goodness and kindness, of his providential care, of his power and glory and authority, and, according to Matthew, of his forgiving and refusing to forgive and of his judging and punishing.[2] In the Gospel of Matthew, indeed, where the word Father is used much oftener than in Mark and Luke, the severity of God is also made more of than in the other two. In view of all these facts, the notion that the traditional Christian idea of a loving heavenly Father is due originally to Jesus is seen to be erroneous.

Like his Jewish contemporaries, Jesus believed in the existence of angels, but they were not made necessary by any notion of divine transcendence, nor did they serve to bridge the chasm between God and the world, as they did

[1] Cf., e. g., Isaiah 64 : 8; Mal. 1 : 6; 2 : 10.

[2] Cf., e. g., Matt. 5 : 45, 48; 7 : 11; Luke 6 : 36; 11 : 13; 23 : 34; Matt. 6 : 8, 26, 32; 10 : 20, 29; 18 : 14; Luke 12 : 30, 32; Matt. 11 : 25; Luke 10 : 21; Matt. 16 : 27; Mark 8 : 38; Luke 9 : 26; Matt. 23 : 9; Luke 10 : 22; Matt. 6 : 14, 15; 10 : 32, 33; 18 : 35.

for many within and without Judaism. God is near and requires no angels or intermediaries through whom to communicate with men. This does not mean that Jesus believed, as is often said, in the doctrine of divine immanence, for that implies a substantial and impersonal conception of God, which was far from his thought. God was always strictly personal for Jesus—Ruler, Judge, Master, Lord, Father. He thought of him in anthropomorphic, not in metaphysical or mystical, fashion. Whatever is true of the fourth Gospel, the Synoptic Gospels have no trace of the mystical presence of the divine or mystical union with the divine.

Jesus was not at all singular in thinking of God as near and easily to be found by those that seek him. His attitude was widely shared by the religious leaders of the people. As Montefiore puts it: "Apocalyptic writers may obtain their revelations by means of angels. The ordinary Rabbinic Jews approached God directly and felt his answer in the heart." [1] Abundant evidence for this from many periods is given by Schechter, who quotes among other utterances the following sentences from the Jerusalem Talmud: "God is near in every kind of nearness"; and "When a man comes to the synagogue and prays, God listens to him, for the petitioner is like a man who talks into the ear of his friend." [2]

[1] In Jackson and Lake, The Acts of the Apostles, vol. I, p. 48.
[2] Schechter, *op. cit.*, p. 31. See the whole of his second chapter.

Like his Jewish contemporaries, Jesus also assumed the existence of evil spirits or demons and of Satan, their chief, but they are not to be feared, for God is supreme and gives the disciples power over them.[1] Their existence, therefore, did not in any way interfere with genuine monotheism.

Jesus also shared the belief in future rewards and punishments which bulked very large in the religion of the Jews. To be sure, he did not interpret the relation between God and men in commercial terms, as many of his countrymen were doing. He did not teach that we establish a claim upon God and may justly demand a reward proportioned to our performance. On the contrary, he emphatically repudiated such an idea, and in doing so was in agreement with the best Jewish sentiment of his own and later times.[2] God he represented as standing to men in the relation of a master to his servants, as that relation was conceived in the ancient world. God is a benevolent master, but, at any rate according to the parable of the laborers recorded in Matthew's Gospel, he has absolute authority and can do what he will with his own, paying the same wage to those who have borne the burden and heat of the day and to those who have labored only a single hour (Matt. 20 : 1 ff.); and according to the Gospel of Luke, the faithful

[1] Mark 3 : 15; Matt. 7 : 22; Luke 10 : 18.
[2] See Schechter, op. cit., chap. 11.

servant will make no claims, as if the reward were his by right, but will do all he can and when he has done his best will recognize that he has done only his duty (Luke 17 : 7–10). Even the parable of the prodigal son, which pictures the relationship between God and men in paternal and filial terms, yet shows the same conception of divine authority and independence. God is not bound to treat men as they deserve. The same is true of the parable of the talents. That God has complete authority and control over men and the right to do with them what seems good to him—this would appear to have been Jesus' idea of God, tempered by his conviction that God is kind and merciful, that he loves to give good things to men, and that his kindness extends even to the unworthy. Jesus' attitude in this matter was wholly in accord with the best Oriental and Jewish thought of his day, but was quite alien to our modern notions of democracy and economic justice.

A controlling conception in the religion of the Jews was that of holiness. The holiness of God was constantly emphasized, as was also the holiness or sacredness of persons and things and places belonging particularly to him or set apart for his use or service. According to Schechter, the most frequent name for God in Rabbinic literature is "The Holy One." [1] It is a remarkable fact that so far as our sources show

[1] Op. cit., p. 199.

God was not once spoken of by Jesus as holy.[1] The conception of holiness, indeed, is almost if not altogether wanting in the words of Jesus. It is suggested by the first petition of the Lord's prayer, "Hallowed be thy name," which is given both by Matthew and Luke, and by the prohibition against swearing, which is found in Matthew alone. But, even so, it is evident that Jesus was thinking for the most part in other terms. He did not condemn the Jewish cult; on the contrary, he treated it with respect. But he did condemn the common tendency to exaggerate it and give it equal value with the weightier matters of the law: judgment and mercy and faith.[2] He was not singular in

[1] Jesus may perhaps have used the phrase "Holy Spirit," which is put into his mouth by all three of the Synoptic Gospels in the passage about blasphemy (Mark 3 : 29 and parallels; in each case in a different form), but even so as a current title for the Spirit of God his use of it can hardly be regarded as significant. Mark 13 : 11 and Luke 12 : 12 also represent Jesus as mentioning the "Holy Spirit," but the parallel passage, Matt. 10 : 20, has "the Spirit of your Father." According to Mark 12 : 36, Jesus referred to David as speaking "in the Holy Spirit," but the parallel passage in Matthew (22 : 43) omits "holy" and in Luke (20 : 42) substitutes "in the Book of Psalms." Similarly the "Holy Spirit" of Luke 11 : 13 appears in the parallel passage, Matt. 7 : 11, as "good things" (ἀγαθά). The triune baptismal formula of Matt. 28 : 19 contains the only other reference to the "Holy Spirit" in the words of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, and this formula is not to be attributed to Jesus (see my Apostles' Creed, pp. 177 ff.). Curiously Jesus' references to the Spirit are very few in any form. In addition to those given in this note, there is only one other: the "Spirit of God" of Matt. 12 : 28, which in the parallel passage, Luke 11 : 20, appears as the "finger of God."

[2] Cf. Matt. 23 : 23 and the parallel in Luke; Mark 2 : 23 ff. and parallels.

this, but he was out of line with the dominant tendency of the day, and perhaps more than anything else his attitude here has led to the feeling that he was religiously different from his contemporaries. Not that he was in any way less of a Jew than they, but that he cared less about things that to many of them were of primary importance.

Summing it all up, we may say that Jesus' idea of God was wholly Jewish. At no point, so far as we can judge from the Synoptic Gospels, did he go beyond his peoples' thought about God. His uniqueness, so far as his teaching goes, lay not in the novelty of it, but in the insight and unerring instinct with which he made his own the best in the thought of his countrymen. His piety seems to have been nourished particularly on Deuteronomy, the Psalms, and Isaiah, and it is the ideas of God found in those writings that are chiefly reflected in his words. So far as the God of the Christians is different from the God of the Jews, it is due not to Jesus' teaching about God, but to the teaching of Paul and those that came after, or still more to the personality of Jesus and the interpretation his followers put upon it.

The personal disciples of Jesus, Jews as they were by birth and training, naturally shared his belief in the God of Israel. We know very little about them, to be sure, but so far as we can

judge, their idea of God was in no way affected either by Jesus' words about God or by their recognition of him as Messiah. God remained, as before, the God and Father of Israel and the creator and ruler of the world. Their assurance that Jesus had risen and ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, and that he had poured out the Spirit upon his disciples, meant no break with Jewish monotheism. It was God who had raised him from the dead and given him the place of honor at his own right hand. They believed Jesus to be the Messiah who was to come again from heaven to usher in the expected kingdom of God, and as such they may have called him Lord as well as Christ, as Peter is represented as doing in Acts 2 : 36: "God hath made him both Lord and Christ." But κύριος was one of Luke's favorite titles for Jesus, and he may have put it into Peter's mouth in this case as later in Acts 11 : 17. At any rate, there is no reason to suppose that the early Jewish disciples deified Jesus, or thought of him as anything more than God's servant and anointed.[1] They had known him in the flesh—a man among men; with their Jewish traditions, the last thing they could have thought of was to count him a divine being or identify him with God.

An important step beyond these early Jewish disciples was taken by the apostle Paul. He was

[1] Cf. Acts 3 : 13 ff.; 4 : 27, 30.

one with Jesus and with the Jews in general in his belief in one almighty God, creator and ruler of the world, "from whom and through whom and to whom are all things"; the sovereign and judge of men, who rewards the good and punishes the wicked; whose righteous purposes no one can thwart; who controls the wills of all men; who shows mercy to some and pardons others; who makes some vessels of honor and others vessels of dishonor; whose right to do as he pleases with his own no one may question. All this is thoroughly Jewish and goes beyond Jesus only in the form of expression.

Like the Jews and Jesus, Paul was a genuine monotheist. God is supreme over all the world, and hence his salvation is universal. "Is he the God of Jews only? Is he not also of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also, seeing God is one who shall justify the circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith" (Romans 3 : 29, 30). Paul's monotheism was not inconsistent with belief in the existence of all sorts of angels and demons and spiritual powers to which he frequently refers.[1] Whether he ascribed real existence to the gods of the heathen is not altogether clear. In one passage he declares them to be nothing at all (1 Cor. 8 : 5); in another he identifies them with demons (1 Cor. 10 : 20). In either case, whether they had real existence or not, they were subject to God as all demons

[1] E. g., Romans 8 : 38; Gal. 3 : 19; Eph. 6 : 12; Col. 2 : 18.

were, including Satan, "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). God is supreme and in complete control of angels and demons as well as of men. This was genuinely Jewish, for Jewish monotheism did not mean the denial of all other superhuman beings, but only the absolute supremacy of God.

Paul also agreed with the Jews and with Jesus in thinking of God not only as righteous and faithful but also as merciful, gracious, kind, forbearing, and long-suffering. His grace was seen especially in sending Christ for our salvation. Unlike Jesus, Paul has considerable to say about God's love, "his great love wherewith he loved us," a love from which nothing can separate us, as he says in his beautiful hymn on divine love in the eighth chapter of Romans. Whether he thought of the love of God as extending to all men or as confined to Christians alone is not certain. There is, at any rate, no passage in his epistles which suggests the wider connotation.

Paul also used the name Father frequently in speaking of God and apparently thought of it as the peculiarly Christian name for God. Occasionally he employed the word in a general sense;[1] but usually it is of God as the Father of Christ and of Christians that he speaks. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they

[1] "Father of glory," Eph. 1:17; "God and Father of all," 4:6.

are sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, in which we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God." "Ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." "And because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father." In other words, not men in general, but Christ and Christians alone are sons of God.

Thus the word Father possessed for Paul a value not residing in the word God or Lord. This advance upon Jesus was perhaps due to reflection upon Christ's special relation to God into which others are brought when they become united to Christ. It has been thought that Paul was anticipated in this because in the passages quoted from Romans and Galatians he uses the Aramaic word Abba, thus seeming to suggest that it was current among the early Jewish disciples. But even though this be the case, there is no reason to suppose, in view of the common use of the word among the Jews, that the disciples interpreted the word as Paul did or read into it the meaning which he gave it.

Again Paul differed with Jesus in emphasizing holiness. To be sure, he does not speak of God as a holy God, but he has a great deal to say about the Holy Spirit, and he tells his readers that they are a holy temple in the Lord, and

that it is their duty to hold themselves aloof from sinners. In this he agreed with the Pharisees, but disagreed with Jesus. His attitude was prophetic of the general attitude of the primitive church, which followed Paul rather than Jesus in the matter. In spite of these and other differences between Paul and Jesus, God was to both of them the almighty creator, sovereign, ruler, and judge of the world.

Paul's chief historical significance, however, lay not in the fact that he shared with Jesus the common Jewish idea of God, but that he went beyond him and the early Jewish disciples as well, in extending the category of deity to include Christ himself. That he thought of Christ as a divine being is abundantly evident. In his epistles he regularly calls him κύριος, the word by which the Septuagint translators of the Old Testament rendered the Hebrew Jahveh, and frequently without any apparent hesitation he applies to him Old Testament passages referring to Jahveh, the God of the Jews.[1]

He also attributes divine functions to Christ, speaking of him as chastening men and controlling their hearts; and he frequently ascribes the same functions indifferently to Christ and to God, for instance, judging the world, calling men to be Christians, and choosing Paul himself to be an apostle.

[1] E. g., 1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 3:16; 10:11; Eph. 4:8; 2 Thess. 1:9.

He speaks of Christ as an object of worship, and prays to him himself;[1] and he declares that in him "dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). Moreover, he represents Christ as existing before he appeared upon earth, and that not as a man or an angel but as a being in the form of God, the image of the invisible God through whom and unto whom all things were created.[2]

To be sure, so far as his epistles show he seldom, perhaps never, called Christ God, though I think he did at least once, for I agree with both the authorized and the revised versions in interpreting the words of Romans 9:5, "who is above all, God blessed for ever," as referring to Christ.[3] But even if he refrained from calling Christ God, it can hardly have been because of his monotheism, as commonly said, for he spoke of "gods many and lords many" and called Satan "the god of this world." As a matter of fact, to have called Christ God would have interfered with his monotheism no more than to call him Lord and treat him as divine, as he certainly did. But to have done so would have been unnecessarily confusing, for however exalted the position he ascribed to Christ, he was

[1] Cf. Romans 10:13; 1 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 2:10; 2 Cor. 12:8; 1 Thess. 3:11 f.

[2] Cf. 1 Cor. 10:4; 2 Cor. 4:4; 8:9; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15 f.

[3] This is the natural interpretation of the passage, and though it stands alone in Paul and though it seems to contradict Eph. 4:6, I do not myself feel the difficulty in it that many do, for Paul was notoriously inconsistent.

one and his Father God another. It did not occur to Paul to identify the two. To have thought of the supreme God as born of a woman and suffering and dying would have been as unnatural for him as for many others of his contemporaries, who saw no difficulty in assuming the appearance on earth of a subordinate being, the agent or representative of God.

It was along this line that Paul solved the problem created by his recognition of Christ as divine. Christ is not the supreme God himself, but the Son of God.[1] He has been sent by his Father, and when he has finally completed his work he will deliver up the kingdom again and be subject to him that God may be all in all.[2]

Whether Paul was the first to call Jesus the Son of God is uncertain. There is no evidence that the phrase was a Messianic title among the Jews of his day. As Dalman remarks, the reluctance on the part of the Jews to use the word God would make "Son of God" an unlikely title for the Messiah.[3] It is hardly probable, therefore, that it was used of Jesus by the early Jewish disciples. Nor, so far as we can judge, did Jesus call himself the Son of God. In the Synoptic Gospels he is nowhere represented as doing

[1] Romans 1:3 and often.

[2] 1 Cor. 15:28. On Christ's subordination to God see also Romans 8:32; 1 Cor. 3:23; 11:3; 2 Cor. 5:18; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:9 ff.

[3] Dalman, Worte Jesu, p. 223.

so, though he does associate the Son with the Father three times. Thus, in Mark 13 : 32 (Matt. 24 : 36), he says: "Of that day and hour knoweth none, neither the angels of heaven nor the Son, but the Father alone." But that the word Son here is not necessarily to be interpreted Son of God is shown by another passage, in which the Son of man is brought into a similar collocation with the Father and the angels: "Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." [1] On the other hand, in Matt. 11 : 27 (Luke 10 : 22): "No one knoweth the Son save the Father, neither doth any one know the Father save the Son"—Son evidently means Son of God. I am unable, however, to think that this utterance came from Jesus himself. It is found, to be sure, in both Matthew and Luke, and is assigned by Harnack to Q, but it is too much out of line with the Synoptic tradition and too closely resembles the Johannine emphasis to commend itself as genuine. The same may be said of Matt. 28 : 19 ("baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"). The evidence that this formula came from Jesus himself is, of course, still weaker.[2]

[1] Mark 8 : 38; Matt. 16 : 27; Luke 9 : 26.
[2] Cf. my Apostles' Creed, pp. 178 ff.

The title Son of God appears frequently in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, but it is hardly likely that it was applied to Jesus by the primitive Jewish Christians, who seem to have spoken of him as the servant of God, the familiar phrase of second Isaiah, rather than the Son of God.[1] The use of the title Son of God for Jesus may have originated among the early Hellenistic Christians or, as seems to me more probable, with Paul himself. At any rate, whether he was the first to call Jesus Son of God, or whether he followed current usage in doing so, in either case he employed the phrase not as a Messianic title, but to distinguish the divine being who had come into the world and died and risen again from the supreme God the Father.

Though he distinguished between the two, he recognized the Son of God as possessing the very nature of God, so that in becoming united to him believers are united to God and are transformed from flesh into spirit and thus saved. In other words, Paul thought of God not merely as a personal being—creator and ruler of the world and father of Christ and of Christians—but also as a spiritual substance which can be shared by more than one, so that though the Father and the Son are two they have the same divine nature. Thus he speaks of God in Christ: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5 : 19); "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2 : 9),

[1] Cf. Matt. 12 : 18; Acts 3 : 13, 26; 4 : 27, 30.

where the use of the impersonal word *θεότης* is particularly significant. Paul also speaks of God in the Christian or the Christian in God, connection with Christ carrying with it connection with God. "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3); "We are a temple of the living God."[1] "Ye are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."[2]

More commonly when Paul is using such mystical language it is the Holy Spirit or Christ he refers to rather than God. While he speaks of God in the Christian or the Christian in God only half a dozen times, he speaks of the Spirit in the same relation seven or eight times as often, and he uses the phrase *ἐν Χριστῷ*, or a similar phrase (*ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, *ἐν κυρίῳ*, *ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ*, etc.) more than a hundred times. In other words, Paul's mysticism is commonly in form at least a Christ or Spirit mysticism. The Spirit is spoken of sometimes as the Spirit of God, sometimes as the Spirit of Christ,[3] being thought of perhaps as the common element in which both share and in which Christians, too, share. Sometimes Spirit and Christ are used interchangeably, and identical functions are ascribed to both,[4] and in at least one passage

[1] 2 Cor. 6:16; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16, where it is said: "Ye are a temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you."

[2] Eph. 2:22; cf. also 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; Phil. 2:13.

[3] Cf. Romans 8:9.

[4] Romans 8:9 ff.; 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:22; Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20; 5:16 f. The usage here is similar to that referred to above in connection with God and Christ.

they are explicitly identified: "The Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3 : 17).

Where Paul got his conception of deity as a spiritual substance which can be shared by more than one is a moot question. Some have traced it to the influence of Stoicism, but I am inclined to look elsewhere. As a matter of fact, it is not his conception of God but of salvation that is fundamental with Paul. The former in its Christian phrasing is but a corollary of the latter. According to Paul, salvation means escape from evil flesh by becoming united to divine spirit, or by being taken possession of by it. Back of the doctrine lay a dualism that was wide-spread in the Hellenistic world of the period and a notion of divine possession or of identification with deity which was common in the mystery cults. I do not myself believe, as many do, that these mystery cults were directly influential in Paul's thought, but he breathed the atmosphere in which they flourished, and under its influence he interpreted his experience of moral bondage and of freedom through Christ, as a process very similar to that taught in some of the mysteries.

Paul's conception of redemption was genuinely mystical, as was true also of the mysteries. By union with the divine, whether phrased as God, Christ, or Spirit, the Christian is transformed from flesh into spirit and so saved. Paul's recognition of Christ as divine was thus

not merely due to the influence of existing Christian sentiment, but was the immediate fruit of his own experience of redemption through him.

The consequence of Paul's mystical doctrine of salvation was that he thought of deity not only as a personal being, but also as spiritual substance—as spiritual substance in which Christians may share as well as Christ. This, of course, is a genuine notion of divine immanence, though the divine indwelling is confined to man and to the Christian man, instead of being extended to the whole creation.[1] The philosophical character of this idea of God is evident. Upon the basis of his experience, Paul built a doctrine of redemption which had back of it the dualistic philosophy and psychology of the Hellenistic world.

The two independent and disparate conceptions of God lie side by side in Paul's epistles. One (the substantial and mystical) is inseparably bound up with his experiential idea of Christianity as a religion of redemption, while the other is simply his heritage as a pious Jew. Not being a systematic theologian, he never tried to reconcile them. Reconciliation was the less needed, for when he thought of God it was commonly in traditional Jewish fashion, as a strictly per-

[1] Romans 8 : 21 ff. suggests a redemption wider than human, involving an ultimate divine indwelling in others than men. Whether this was suggested, as has been thought, by the Jewish hope of a new heaven and a new earth it is difficult to say.

sonal being, while it was only when he thought of salvation or of the Christian life that the mystical and substantial notion was implied; and nearly always only implied rather than expressed. The inconsistency was also obscured by his common use of the term Spirit or Christ for the divine reality so involved.

Paul had not only a double conception of God, but also a double conception of Christ: the man who had lived and died and the divine Spirit by union with which men are transformed and saved. He did not separate Christ the divine Spirit from Christ the man, and make two beings of them, any more than he separated God the Spirit from the personal God, and thought of them as two beings. Christ was at once man and God, and God was at once a personal father and the Spirit in which the Father and the Son and Christian believers all share. He was not conscious of any inconsistency. For a Jew brought up in the midst of the Hellenistic world there was none. He illustrates in his own thinking the twofold strain which has run through nearly all Christian thought since his day, for Christianity was the child both of Judaism and of the orientalized Hellenism of the Roman world.

The fourth Gospel and the first Epistle of John are full of Paulinism, and in them both we have the twofold conception of God that ap-

pears in Paul's epistles. God is spoken of in strictly personal terms as the only true God, the creator and ruler of the world, whose will we must obey, who rewards those that keep his commandments, who sends Christ to save men and to whom Christ returns when his work here is done.

John differs with the Synoptic Jesus and with Paul in omitting almost completely the severe side of God's character. It is true he once speaks of the wrath of God on unbelievers (John 3 : 36), but in 5 : 22 he says "The Father judgeth no one, but hath given all judgment to the Son," where his interest, to be sure, is rather to exalt Christ than to throw light upon the character of God. He differs also with the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels, but agrees with Paul in his emphasis upon God's love, which is usually love for Christ or for Christians, but in one passage appears as love for the world: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that everyone that believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." [1]

The word Father is used for God very frequently in John, more often, indeed, than in all the rest of the New Testament. In the fourth Gospel it is the name Christ chiefly employs in speaking of God, either simply "the Father" or "my Father." As by Paul, God is thought of by John as the Father of Christ and of Christians,

[1] John 3 : 16; cf. 1 John 2 : 2.

not of men in general or of sinners and unbelievers. "If God were your Father ye would love me. . . . Ye are of your father the devil." [1] "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin, because his seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil." [2] Evidently, according to John, it is not birth, but the new birth, that makes men children of God.[3]

John is also at one with Paul in thinking of God in mystical and substantial terms. In his doctrine of salvation he differs with Paul in details but agrees with him in the essential matter. Salvation, to John as to Paul, is a mystical affair and requires the indwelling of the divine. The indwelling divine is sometimes spoken of as God, sometimes as Christ or the Spirit. "If we love one another God abideth in us"; "Every one that loveth is begotten of God"; "Abide in the Son and in the Father"; "Abide in me and I in you"; "I am the bread of life"; "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"; "This we know by the Spirit which he gave us." Whereas in Paul the indwelling di-

[1] John 8 : 42, 44; cf. also 8 : 47.
[2] 1 John 3 : 9, 10.
[3] Cf. John 3 : 3, 5. Whereas Paul frequently speaks of Christians as sons of God (υἱοὶ θεοῦ), John never does, but refers to them instead as children of God (τέκνα θεοῦ), evidently with the desire of exalting Christ and magnifying the difference between him and his disciples.

vine appears usually as Christ or the Spirit, in John the situation is reversed, and God is spoken of in mystical terms more frequently than either the Spirit or Christ.

If anything, the inconsistency between the two conceptions of God is more striking in John than in Paul, not only because there is more God-mysticism but also because the two ideas are brought into more immediate juxtaposition, e. g.: "He that keepeth his commandments abideth in him and he in him."[1] It is evident from such a passage as this that the author was quite unaware of any inconsistency between the two.

I have said that the indwelling divine is spoken of by John now as God, again as Christ, and again as the Spirit. As a matter of fact, like Paul, John believed in the divinity of Christ and even spoke of him as God. To be sure, he distinguished the Father and the Son as Paul did, but at the very beginning of the Gospel he declares not only that the Logos was with God (*πρὸς τὸν θεόν*) but was God (or divine: *θεός* not *ὁ θεός*), the Logos who "became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus himself is represented as saying "I and the Father are one"; "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; "Before Abraham became I am." After his resurrection Thomas addresses him as "My Lord and my God" (*ὁ θεός μου*), and in the first

[1] 1 John 3 : 24; cf. also 2 : 4-6.

epistle it is said categorically: "This is the true God" (ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός).[1]

Another early Christian representing the same mystical tendency as Paul and John and a similar belief in the deity of Christ was Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch in the early second century, who wrote his extant epistles perhaps twenty years later than John. "Knowing that ye are full of God I have exhorted you briefly." [2] "I know that ye are not puffed up, for ye have Jesus Christ in yourselves." [3] "It is therefore profitable for you to be in blameless unity, that ye may always partake of God." [4] "Let us therefore do all things as if he (i. e., Christ) were dwelling in us, that we may be his temples and he in us our God." [5] Over and over again he refers to Christ as God, in all but one instance as ὁ θεός. "There is one physician, both fleshly and spiritual, begotten and unbegotten, God in man." [6] "Our God Jesus the Christ was conceived by Mary." [7] "Nothing visible is good; for our God Jesus Christ, being in the Father, is the more visible." [8] "Suffer me to be an imi-

[1] I find it impossible to interpret this sentence in any other way.
[2] Epistle to the Magnesians, chap. 14.
[3] Ibid., chap. 12.
[4] Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 4.
[5] Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 15. The Pauline phrase, ἐν Χριστῷ, is frequent in Ignatius, e. g., Eph., 1, 3, 11, 20; Trall., 9; Smyr., 11; Polycarp, 8.
[6] Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 7.
[7] Ibid., chap. 18.
[8] Epistle to the Romans, chap. 3.

tator of the passion of my God." [1] "I glorify Jesus Christ, the God who has thus given you wisdom." [2]

Irenæus of Lyons, writing half a century later, also followed the same tradition. "Therefore, as we have already said, he (i. e., Christ) united man to God." [3] "The subsistence of life comes from participation in God." [4] "How can they be saved unless it was God who worked out their salvation on earth? Or how shall man pass into God unless God has passed into man?" [5] "Jesus Christ our Lord who because of his great love was made what we are that he might bring us to be what he also is." [6] Irenæus even went the full length of deification or θείωσις. "We have not been made gods in the beginning, but at first men, then at length gods." [7] "We have shown that no one else is called God by the Scriptures except the Father of all, and the Son, and those who possess the adoption." [8]

[1] Ignatius, Epistle to the Romans, chap. 6.

[2] Epistle to the Smyrnæans, chap. 1. So also in Ephesians, preface; Romans, preface; Polycarp, 8.

[3] Against Heresies, III, 18:7. I have used Harvey's edition of Irenæus' Adversus Hæreses, but throughout the lectures, for the convenience of the reader, I have given the references to Irenæus according to the chapter divisions of Massuet (the Benedictine edition) and Stieren, which are followed in the English translation in the Ante-Nicene Fathers. As these divisions are indicated in the margin of Harvey's edition the passages referred to can be found, whichever edition is in the hands of the reader.

[4] Ibid., IV, 20:5.

[5] Ibid., IV, 33:4.

[6] Ibid., V, preface.

[7] Ibid., IV, 38:4.

[8] Ibid., IV, preface.

Yet all these writers thought of God in traditional Jewish fashion as a personal being, the creator and ruler of the world and the sovereign and judge of men. And when they used the word God it was ordinarily such a being they meant. None of them seemed to be aware of any inconsistency or made any attempt to reconcile the two disparate conceptions. The inconsistency has been a standing one in Christian history, though commonly obscured by the emphasis on sacramental grace, as already by Irenæus, or by the use of the term Spirit for the indwelling divine.

It is not necessary to carry the matter further. I have been interested chiefly to show how the original Jewish monotheism, with which Jesus and Paul and many of the primitive Christians started, was early broadened to make room for Christ, so that he was not merely the way to God but God himself.

In the next lecture I propose to deal with another set of Christians altogether, for whom the course of development was entirely different.

LECTURE II

THE GOD OF THE PRIMITIVE GENTILE CHRISTIANS

THE early Christians were drawn from both the Jewish and the Gentile world. Those who came from Jewish circles, whether they were themselves Jews or had formed their religious ideas under the influence of Judaism, believed in God before they believed in Jesus and brought with them into the Christian Church a monotheistic faith to which their thought about Christ was compelled to adjust itself. Those who came from non-Jewish circles were in a different position altogether. They might believe in one god or in many gods, but neither their monotheism nor their polytheism was likely to prevent their recognizing Christ as divine. While monotheism and polytheism were both represented in the religious world of the period, the former was usually the affair of the philosopher, and it is improbable that the mass of the early Gentile converts, who were certainly not drawn from the philosophic schools, had any initial interest in monotheism or any understanding of it. However that may be, it is evident that from the very beginning Jesus ap-

peared to them as Lord. Dead and risen again, he must have reminded them inevitably of the divine lords of the ethnic cults, long familiar to the Græco-Roman world—Adonis, Attis, Serapis, and the rest—and they could not think of him as less divine than they.

The ancient Græco-Roman world was used to all sorts of deities and was not always averse even to deifying human beings, provided they were persons of uncommon dignity and worth who had deserved well of their fellows or were of sufficient prominence and authority to be widely revered.[1] Inevitably Gentile Christians would take it for granted that Jesus Christ, whom they recognized as a saviour and reverenced and served as such, was a divine being, whether they were told so or not. As I said in the first lecture, Paul thought of Christ as divine, but even had he not, converts to Christianity from the pagan world of the period certainly would have done so.

The term κύριος, or Lord, was Paul's favorite title for Christ, and whether under his influence or independently of him, it was generally applied to Jesus from the earliest days. All our primitive Christian documents call Christ Lord, except Titus and the Epistles of John. Whatever the word meant to others, at any rate to the Gentile converts it must have suggested Christ's divinity. Κύριος was not a traditional title for

[1] Cf. Tertullian's Apology, chap. 2.

the gods in the Græco-Roman world; they were usually called θεοί, not κύριοι. But particularly in the mystery religions, and also later in the imperial cult, the title κύριος was common, and to ascribe it to Jesus in the first and second centuries was to count him a divine being.[1]

Paul drew a distinction between God and Lord (θεός and κύριος), and while he constantly called Christ Lord, he usually, if not always, refrained from calling him God. But there is no reason to suppose that such a distinction was drawn in the Gentile world of the period. The lord of the cult was always a god, and to call him Lord meant not to throw any doubt upon his divinity, but to emphasize his relation to the adherents of the cult: he was their Lord and Master, they his servants. Similarly with the relation of the early Gentile Christians to Jesus Christ. He was their Lord and Master, and in him they found what they were seeking. They knew they were saved by him. With this assurance many of them, at any rate, were doubtless satisfied, and did not ask what his relation might be to some other god beyond and above him, or to the universe at large.

It is commonly taken for granted that the original object of worship in the primitive Gentile Christian communities was the God of the Jews—the one almighty God, creator and ruler of the world—and that after a time there was

[1] See Bousset, Kyrios Christos, pp. 108 ff.

associated with him the Lord Jesus Christ, a subordinate being, who was gradually raised to the rank of divinity and finally declared to be true God, one in substance with the Father. This, however, I believe is seriously to misunderstand the course of the development. Undoubtedly Christians of Jewish birth or training worshipped the God of the Jews from the beginning, and only afterward worshipped Christ and recognized him as divine, as many of them never did. But converts drawn directly from the Gentile world were in a different situation. They did not begin with the God of the Jews, but with the Lord Jesus Christ. Not the former, but the latter, brought them into the Christian circle. They sought the assurance of salvation and they found it in Christ. His presence they were convinced of as they gathered together, a company of Christian believers, filled with enthusiasm, singing, praying, prophesying, speaking with tongues, partaking of the eucharist. In these circumstances the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ did not follow the worship of the God of the Jews and constitute an appendix thereto; it was primary and original. That there were philosophical thinkers who were attracted by the monotheism of the Jews and became Christians because of it is undoubtedly true, but they were vastly in the minority, and the Roman world was not won to Christianity by any such theological interest. On the contrary, faith in

Christ and in his salvation converted the masses then, as it has converted multitudes in every age since.

This may be granted, and yet it may be said that even so, when the Gentiles accepted Christianity they accepted the God of the Jews as their God, and Christ only in subordination to him—that from the beginning the Jewish God was their chief object of worship and Christ was given only a secondary place in their devotions. This was undoubtedly true of those who had already felt the influence of Judaism[1] and may have been true, also, of many others, but certainly not of all. Had the Gentile Christians lived in a monotheistic world, they might have been expected to subordinate Christ to God as Christians of Jewish antecedents did. As it was, they needed no supreme God above and beyond Christ, and to suppose such a God central in their thought is to misinterpret their interest and attitude. Jewish Christianity was monotheistic and Gentile Christianity became monotheistic under influences to be referred to later, but there is no reason to suppose that the latter was monotheistic from the start. The Jews had won their monotheism only gradually and by many struggles; to imagine that Jewish Christians could impose it without more ado

[1] Among those representing this attitude were Clement of Rome (the author of First Clement) and Hermas. The contrast in this respect between them and the author of the so-called Epistle of Barnabas is very striking.

upon the converts to the new faith from the polytheistic civilization of the day is to overestimate their influence. Monotheism, I think it can be shown, was not an original endowment, or, at any rate, not everywhere an original endowment, of Gentile Christianity. On the contrary, it was compelled to make its way against serious opposition and was finally established only after generations of struggle. Gentile Christians had to be educated up to it, just as they had to be educated up to ethical principles that were new to them.

On the other hand, the recognition of Christ as Lord was immediate and universal, and in Gentile Christian circles was never questioned, so far as we can discover. In the Christological discussions of the third and following centuries, it was not the lordship of Christ that was disputed: Adoptionists and Arians recognized it, as well as their opponents. Their differences had to do only with its origin and implications, or with Christ's relation to the supreme God.

The saviour gods of the current mystery religions were not supreme gods—creators and rulers of the world—nor were they thought of by their votaries as the only gods. Initiation into this or that cult did not mean the denial of other deities, but only the special consecration of oneself to the service of a particular deity. This may well have been the situation of many early Christians. Their personal piety centred in the

Lord Jesus Christ. In communion with him and in devotion to him they found their religious life. But they may not have felt it necessary to deny the existence of other deities or to accept the one God of Israel as their God.

There was no antecedent reason, indeed, why the Gentile Christians should accept the God of the Jews whom Jesus worshipped, any more than the Jewish ceremonial law which he observed and the Jewish practices in which he was brought up. The fact that Jesus himself and his personal disciples were Jews no more required the Gentile Christians to be Jews in their customs and beliefs than the fact that Adonis was a Syrian deity, Attis a Phrygian, and Isis and Serapis Egyptian deities required their adherents to become Syrians or Phrygians or Egyptians, and to accept the religious tenets of those peoples. Whether Judaism or any part of it was to be regarded as permanently essential to Christianity was a matter to be determined, and by no means went without saying. The early Jewish disciples thought the whole of it essential and regarded the new faith as only a form of Judaism. Paul broke with Judaism and made of Christianity a new religion, but he did not break with the Jewish God. On the contrary, he recognized him as the God of Christians as well as Jews.

But by what right did he reject a part of the old system and retain another part? Evi-

dently there was room for a difference of opinion. Paul's authority was not great enough to compel the general adoption of his doctrine of redemption, nor were other Christians under the necessity of accepting the Jewish God simply because he did. We can hardly avoid the conclusion that if belief in the God of the Jews was finally universal among Christians it was because it commended itself as sound rather than because it was from the beginning an essential part of the new faith. As already said, most of the early Gentile converts were not seeking monotheism, but salvation through Christ. This being so, it is gratuitous to assume that they must have accepted monotheism when they accepted Christianity. On the contrary, they may well have taken Christ as their Lord and Saviour, without taking his God and Father as their God.

While these lectures were going through the press I came upon the following interesting passage from Archbishop Söderblom, of Upsala, which illustrates a similar situation in the modern world: "Some ten years ago a religious personality, Admiral Réveillère, said to me at Brest, 'There have been times in my life when I was an atheist, but I should nevertheless have wanted to call myself a Christian if I had dared.' In our time there are certainly many in the same case. Christ is for them the rock of their religion and of their heart. . . . Doubt

may beset a person touching the godhood of God, but not the godhood of Christ." [1]

I do not mean, of course, to suggest that all the primitive Gentile Christians took Christ as their Lord and Saviour without taking his God and Father as their God. On the contrary, I have no doubt that many of them accepted the Jewish God and the Jewish Bible when they accepted Jesus Christ. The primitive situation was probably far from uniform and stereotyped. Here conditions were of one sort, there of another. And even in the same communities there may have been wide differences. There were at first no creeds and no standards of orthodoxy, and if Christ were but accepted and recognized as Lord, all else must have seemed of minor consequence. In this connection Paul's own words are instructive: "I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, through which also ye are saved" (1 Cor. 15 : 1–2). The gospel that follows has to do only with Christ, not God. Again: "Some preach Christ of envy and strife and some of good will; these out of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel, but the others proclaim Christ out of rivalry, not sincerely, thinking to add affliction to my bonds. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I

[1] Söderblom: Vater, Sohn und Geist (1909), pp. 60 f.

rejoice, yea and will rejoice. . . . For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1 : 15–21).

It is interesting to contrast with this Paul's stern words in Gal. 1 : 7–8: "There are some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven preach another gospel than that we have preached unto you, let him be anathema." Of this gospel preached to the Galatians Paul says: "Neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ," showing that it was something different from Judaism and Jewish monotheism.

Paul's teaching about the law in his Epistle to the Galatians—that they were not justified by works of law but by faith in Jesus Christ, and that they who were justified by law were severed from Christ—and his declaration that circumcision is nothing nor uncircumcision, but a new creation, might easily lead his converts to think the whole Jewish system including Jewish monotheism itself of small importance. Paul preached to the Gentiles not only Jesus Christ but also the one God of the Jews, as is clear from his first Epistle to the Thessalonians: "For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God" (1 Thess. 1 : 9). And other Jewish missionaries probably did the same thing. It is evident, also, that he

and they must have acquainted their converts with the Jewish Bible, for it was familiarly known in the early Gentile churches. But, even so, Paul put Jesus Christ in the forefront of his preaching, and they can hardly have done otherwise. It is no accident, indeed, that the adherents of the new faith were early called Christians.

In these circumstances, finding their need of salvation met by the Lord Christ, it would not be strange if many of those coming into the Christian circle from the Gentile world, with its saviour gods and mystery cults, paid little attention to the monotheism of the Jewish missionaries and accepted Jesus Christ without accepting, or without retaining, anything more. The experience is a common one with all missionaries and evangelists. Seldom is their message embraced or understood in its entirety. Often aspects of it are neglected or forgotten which seem essential to the missionaries themselves but for one or another reason are less interesting or less convincing to their converts.

The antecedent possibility of such a form of primitive Gentile Christianity as I have been describing is, I think, quite evident. Whether there are adequate grounds for assuming its existence is another question. It seems at first blush quite inconsistent with our primitive Christian documents, for in all of them we find both God and Christ or the Father and the Son

referred to. And yet this can hardly be regarded as conclusive, for many ancient beliefs out of line with what ultimately became the orthodox faith have perished, and the documents containing them have disappeared. Conceivably there may have been many in the early generations whose God was Jesus Christ and who knew no other God, though their belief did not find literary expression, or if it did was afterward forgotten, under the pressure of the growing faith in the God of the Jews, the creator and ruler of the world. And there are certain circumstances that point, I think, in this direction—circumstances none of them, perhaps, conclusive if taken separately, but together forming strong evidence of a form of primitive Gentile Christianity whose God was Jesus Christ alone, and to which the God of the Jews, the creator and ruler of the world, meant nothing. I wish to devote the present lecture to the presentation of this evidence.

For one thing it is quite certain and beyond dispute that Christ was widely recognized as divine among the early Christians. The general use of the title Lord and its significance, at least for Gentile Christians, I have already spoken of, and in the previous lecture reference was made to the attitude of Paul and John, both of whom thought of Christ as divine. Certain ancient manuscripts of the book of Acts put into Paul's mouth, in a We-passage, the words: "The

Church of God (*τοῦ θεοῦ*) which he purchased with his own blood." [1] The Epistle to Titus refers to the "appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus" [2]; and in the Epistle to the Hebrews (1 : 8) the words of the Psalm, "Thy throne, O God (*ὁ θεός*), is forever and ever," are represented as addressed to the Son. From the second century we have many more documents than from the first, and in them Christ is called God even more frequently. As remarked in the previous lecture, Ignatius, in the early part of the century, spoke of him as God (both *θεός* and *ὁ θεός*) over and over again, and Polycarp, writing shortly afterward, referred to him—at least according to certain manuscripts—as "our Lord and God, Jesus Christ." [3] In 2 Peter, dating from the middle of the century, he is spoken of as "our God and Saviour Jesus Christ," [4] and the author of 2 Clement, writing perhaps about the same time, calls him God (*ὁ θεός*) more than once [5] and even refers to him as a father. [6] In 2 Clement, indeed, it is said explicitly: "We must think of Jesus Christ as of God (*περὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*

[1] Acts 20 : 28. The revised version reads Lord instead of God, but the weight of manuscript authority favors God, which is adopted by Westcott and Hort.

[2] τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ: Titus 2 : 13.

[3] Dominum nostrum et deum Jesum Christum: Polycarp to the Philippians, 12 : 2.

[4] τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ: 2 Peter 1 : 1.

[5] 2 Clement 9 : 7; 12 : 1; 13 : 4.

[6] "As a father he called us sons" (2 Clement 1 : 4).

ὡς περὶ θεοῦ), as of the judge of living and dead" (1 : 1); and throughout the epistle the same functions are ascribed indifferently to God and to Christ, and they are spoken of as if they were for all practical purposes identical.

The second-century apologist, Justin Martyr, defends the worship of Christ and refers to him more than once as "another God" (ἕτερος θεός),[1] insisting upon his divinity, but distinguishing him from the supreme God. His younger contemporary, the apologist Tatian, though he elsewhere distinguishes sharply enough between Christ and God, yet refers in one instance to "the suffering God" (chap. 13), and Melito of Sardis, in a fragment of a lost sermon on the passion, declares that "God (ὁ θεός) suffered at the hand of Israel."[2] Celsus, the famous opponent of Christianity, who wrote about 177, evidently understood that the Christians counted Jesus a god, and continually twitted them upon the fact. In his work against Celsus, Origen says: "Since he has accused us, I know not how often already, of regarding Jesus, who was of a mortal body, as a god, and of thinking that we act piously in this, it is superfluous to speak farther of the matter."[3]

[1] Dialogue with Trypho, chaps. 55 and 56; cf. also 34, 61, 126, 127; Apology, I, 6; II, 13.

[2] In Otto's edition of the Greek Apologists, vol. IX, p. 416.

[3] Against Celsus, III, 41; cf. also IV, 3; and VIII, 41, where Celsus refers to Christ as "thy God" (τὸν σὸν θεόν).

Because the same terms are used in many of our early documents in speaking of Christ as are used in speaking of God, it is often impossible to tell which the writer is referring to, not necessarily that he did not know himself, but that he leaves us in doubt as to which he has in mind. Evidently it seemed, as a rule, unimportant to distinguish them carefully. Thus, in the Pastoral Epistles, though Christ is called God only in Titus 2 : 13, Lord is used both of God and Christ,[1] and while God and Christ are frequently distinguished, it is sometimes impossible to tell whether Lord refers to the former or the latter.[2]

Similarly, in the book of Acts Lord is used both of God and of Christ, and in a number of instances it is difficult or impossible to determine which is meant.[3] On the other hand, God is not used of Christ except in certain ancient manuscripts of 20 : 28, and perhaps in chapter 18, where "the way of the Lord" (apparently meaning Christ) is spoken of in verse 25 and "the way of God" in verse 26. In Barnabas and Hermas God is spoken of indifferently as God and Lord, and while Christ is not called God (unless it be in Barnabas 16 : 8), but rather Lord and Son of God, in a number of instances it is

[1] Κύριος is not found in Titus.

[2] E. g., 2 Timothy 1 : 8, 16; 2 : 22, 24; 3 : 11.

[3] E. g., 8 : 22, 24; 16 : 14; 20 : 32; 21 : 14. This is true also of the Epistle of James (cf. 5 : 10, 11 with 5 : 14, 15).

uncertain whether Lord refers to him or to God.[1]

Assuming everywhere an original Jewish monotheism, it is difficult to see how such a confusion could arise. When Christ came to be recognized as divine, it might fairly be expected that the distinction between him and the Father would be always in mind and appear in the designations applied to him. This, in fact, is exactly what we find in Paul's epistles. While he commonly calls Christ Lord, he usually avoids the word in speaking of God, except in quotations from the Old Testament in which Jahveh is rendered κύριος in the LXX, and there is seldom any doubt as to whether he is referring to God or Christ, and that, too, though he raises Christ to the level of deity and recognizes him as sharing the spiritual substance of God. In 1 Peter, also, Lord is used of Christ, but of God only in quotations from the Old Testament.[2] In the epistle to the Hebrews, Christ is called Lord and Son of God but not God; and though Lord is used also of God, there is no confusion in any instance between God and Christ. Similarly the author of 1 Clement never calls Christ God, but regularly calls him Lord. To be sure, he also calls God Lord, and that not simply in quotations from the Old Testament; and in

[1] Cf. Barnabas 1, 2, 7, 10, and Hermas, Sim., IX, 10, 11, 14, 23, 25 ff.

[2] In 1 Peter, Christ is called neither God nor the Son of God.

one passage he uses the title in the same sentence for both God and Christ: "God the all-seeing, and master of spirits, and Lord of all flesh, who chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through him for a peculiar people." [1] But even so, there is no question in any instance as to the one of whom Clement is speaking. Indeed, the distinction between God and Christ is more complete both in Clement and in Hebrews than in Paul, for neither of them has any of Paul's mysticism.

The same is true, also, of the Didache, in which Lord is the standing title for Christ. In it Lord is also used once in prayer to God (10:5), and once (14:3) in a quotation from the Old Testament, where it may refer to God, or the author may be thinking of Christ as speaking in the prophets, an idea very common in the early church. But in general there is no confusion between the two in the Didache. On the other hand, in many documents, as already said, the situation is different and it is often impossible to tell whether God or Christ is referred to.

If the lordship of Jesus was first recognized, and he was only later associated with God, such confusion is quite explicable. Having already been given the titles Lord and God, by which the God of the Jews was known, he could hardly be deprived of them. Moreover, it is to be noticed that to add Jesus Christ to God as an ob-

[1] 1 Clement 64.

ject of worship, and to call him Lord and God, might well seem polytheistic, as it actually did to many Jewish Christians. But to add the Jewish God, the creator and Lord of the world, to Christ was a different matter altogether. It conserved monotheism rather than destroyed it, for it brought the Saviour Christ into connection with the one God of all the earth. It is, to say the least, a curious phenomenon, whose significance has not been adequately recognized, that Christ was given the same titles by which the God of the Jews was known, without arousing any general protest, and that the resulting confusion seems to have troubled nobody. If my assumption be correct, the phenomenon is less difficult to explain.

I have been speaking of the divine titles ascribed to Christ in our early documents. Equally significant is the evidence that he was an object of worship from the very beginning. Paul besought him thrice for the removal of his thorn in the flesh; and prayed that God and the Lord Jesus Christ might direct his way to the Thessalonians, and might comfort their hearts and establish them in every good work and word. Most of his epistles begin and end with benedictions in which the grace of God and of Christ, in some cases of Christ alone, is invoked. In the Book of Acts Stephen is represented as praying: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Ac-

cording to 1 Cor. 1 : 2, the Christians of Paul's day in every place were in the habit of calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,[1] and in 1 John 5 : 14 ff. prayer to Christ is spoken of as if it were a regular practice. With this may be compared the statement in the Martyrdom of Polycarp, written in 156, that the Christians were accustomed to pray to Christ.[2] The apocalypse of John contains a "new song" addressed to "the Lamb" (Rev. 5 : 9–10); and in Pliny's letter to Trajan, written in 111, it is said that the Christians "sing to Christ as to God" (carmen Christo quasi deo dicere). We are reminded by this of the words of an anonymous writer of the early third century, quoted by Eusebius: "How many psalms and odes written by faithful brethren from the beginning celebrate Christ, the Word of God, speaking of him as divine."[3]

Also significant is the testimony of the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, which reflect in a peculiar degree the attitude of the common Christian. In most of them Christ appears quite frankly and naïvely as God, and prayers are freely offered to him. Thus, in the Acts of Paul and Thecla,[4] dating from the second century,

[1] Cf. also Romans 10 : 13; 2 Tim. 2 : 22; Acts 9 : 14; 22 : 16.

[2] Martyrdom of Polycarp, chap. 17.

[3] θεολογοῦντες: Eusebius's Church History, V, 25 : 5. Cf. the famous hymn to Christ in Clement of Alexandria's Pædagogus, III, 12.

[4] Lipsius and Bonnet, Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha, I, 235 ff.

probably the third quarter of the century, Thecla prays: "My God, thou Son of the Most High, who art in heaven, grant her according to her wish that her daughter Falconella may live forever" (chap. 29). And again: "My God and God of this house where the light shone upon me, Christ Jesus, Son of God, my help in prison, my help before the governors, my help in the fire, my help among the wild beasts, thou thyself art God and to thee be glory forever. Amen" (42).

In the Acts of John,[1] which date from about the same time, prayers to Christ as God are very numerous. "Now the time of refreshing and confidence is with thee, O Christ; now for us weary ones the time of help from thee, physician who healest without cost. Keep my entrance here from being made sport of. I beseech thee, Jesus, help such a great multitude to come to thee, thou Master of the universe" (22). "Glory be to thee, my Jesus, the only God of truth" (43). "God of the ages, Jesus Christ, God of truth" (82).[2]

In the Acts of Peter[3] and the Acts of Thomas,[4] both of which belong to the early third century, but whose sources go back to the second century, the situation is similar. Thus in the Acts of Peter the apostle prays: "Thou most good

[1] Lipsius and Bonnet, II, 1; 151 ff.
[2] Cf. also chaps. 21, 24, 107, 108, etc.
[3] Lipsius and Bonnet, I, 45 ff.
[4] Ibid., II, 2, pp. 99 ff.

and alone holy, in thy name have I spoken, for thou didst appear unto us, O God Jesus Christ" (5); and again: "Thou alone art the Lord God. For praising thee how many lips we need, that we may be able to give thanks unto thee for thy mercy" (21).[1]

And in the Acts of Thomas, Thomas says: "I give thanks to thee, Lord Jesus, that thou hast revealed thy truth in these men. For thou alone art the God of truth and not another" (25); and again: "Jesus Christ, whose knowledge is despised in this country; Jesus Christ, of whom nothing has been heard in this country; Jesus, who receivest all apostles in every country and city and by whom all worthy of thee are glorified; Jesus, who hast taken a form and become like a man and hast appeared to all of us in order not to separate us from thine own love; Lord, thou art he who hast given thyself for us and hast bought us by thy blood as a precious possession. But what have we, O Lord, to give thee in exchange for the life which thou hast given us? For what we wish is given to us, and that is that we may ask thee and live." And the author continues: "When he had spoken thus many came from all sides to see the apostle of the new God."[2]

It is not simply that prayers are offered to Christ as well as to God in these apocryphal

[1] Cf. also chaps. 2, 26 f., 32, 39, etc.

[2] Acts of Thomas, 72–73. Cf. chaps. 10, 47, 53, 97, 107, 123, 144 ff.

Acts, but that in most of them prayers to Christ are much more frequent than prayers to God, and that he appears not only as a god, but as the God of the Christians, or the new God proclaimed by the apostles. That he is also frequently referred to as the Son of God does not weaken the force of this consideration, for, as will appear in the next lecture, long before these Acts were written, he had been brought by the theologians into connection with God, the creator of the world, and had been subordinated to him. All the more significant is it that in spite of this Christ still appears so commonly as if he were a god in his own right, the God of the Christians, as already said. This seems to reflect an earlier and more naïve situation.

It was the kind of situation reflected in such documents as these that the great Alexandrian theologian, Origen, had in mind when in his tract on prayer he exhorted his readers to pray to God in the name of Christ. The chief difficulty was not that they were leaving Christ out and praying to God without Christ, but that they were leaving God out and praying to Christ instead of God.

"If we once understand what prayer is," Origen says, "we shall see that prayer ought never to be offered to any creature, not even to Christ himself, but only to the God and Father of all, to whom also our Saviour himself prayed, as we have said above, and taught us to pray.

. . . But as it is not seemly for one who understands accurately how to pray to pray to him who prays but to him whom our Lord Jesus Christ taught us in prayer to call Father, we should never offer prayer to the Father without him, as he himself clearly showed. . . . For he did not say 'Ask me' or 'Ask the Father' simply, but 'If you ask the Father for anything he will give it you in my name.' . . . Therefore when we hear Jesus saying these things let us pray to God through him, all saying the same and not falling into division over the manner of praying; or are we not divided if some of us pray to the Father and some to the Son? For they commit a sin of ignorance who in great simplicity, without testing and examining, pray to the Son whether with the Father or without the Father." [1]

Evidently prayer to Christ was common, still common, I should put it, at any rate among the simple-minded, in the circles for which Origen wrote.

Ultimately, as everybody knows, the Christians of the world church had two objects of worship, God and Christ; that is, God the Father and God the Son, both equally divine. Hitherto historians have confined themselves to the problem: how to explain the addition of the worship of Christ to the worship of God. If my reading of the early situation is correct, another

[1] On Prayer, chaps. 15, 16.

problem equally pressing is how to explain the addition of the worship of God to the worship of Christ. To this problem I hope to address myself in the next lecture.

Again, the attitude of the second-century Christian Marcion, the most influential heresiarch of the early church, throws light upon the primitive situation. The heart of his Christianity was salvation through Christ. He was a convinced disciple of Paul and under his influence interpreted salvation as release from the world, the flesh, and the law. But he was not a Jew, and the dialectic by which Paul was able to retain the God of his fathers while abandoning the religious system in which he had been brought up, and to recognize the divine origin of the law while denying its continued validity, was incomprehensible to him. In freeing men from the world, the flesh, and the law, Christ seemed to Marcion to have freed them also from the God who had created the world and given the law; the God, namely, of the Jews. Christ, therefore, had not come from this God. He was the representative, or was himself the appearance in visible form of another God altogether, a God hitherto unknown, who had taken pity on men, and though he had not made them and was in no way responsible for them, had determined to do what he could to save them from their sad estate. He was a saviour, not a judge, a god of

pure love and mercy, in sharpest contrast with the God of the Jews, who was a despot, just for the most part, but jealous, stern, harsh, and unlovely, and the creator of evil as well as good.

In his work against Marcion, our chief source for a knowledge of the latter's teaching, Tertullian says: "Finding in Christ, as it were, another disposition of simple and pure benignity, a disposition unlike that of the creator, Marcion easily argued that in his Christ was revealed a new and strange divinity." [1] "A better God has been discovered, who does not take offense, is not angry, does not inflict punishment, who has nothing to do with hell-fire and the gnashing of teeth in outer darkness. He is nothing but good. He prohibits sin, indeed, but only in writing. He is among you, if you wish to pledge him allegiance, that you may seem to honour God; for he does not want your fear. And thus the Marcionites show that they do not fear their God at all. The bad they say are to be feared but the good to be loved." [2]

According to Marcion, the God revealed by Jesus Christ was the supreme God, but his greatness consisted not in his physical prowess—he was not the creator and ruler of the world—but in his saving love. "A single work suffices for our God," Tertullian represents the Marcionites as saying, "that he has delivered man by

[1] Against Marcion, book I, chap. 2.
[2] Ibid., I, 27.

his supreme and extraordinary goodness. This is to be preferred to all the locusts."[1] Though the Christian God is not the creator of the world, he has shown his superiority to the world creator by releasing men from his control; and he has a special realm of his own, which will endure long after the God of the Jews and his creation have passed away.[2]

For our immediate purpose, Marcion is significant, not because he interpreted the character and supremacy of the Christian God as he did, but because he read Christianity solely in terms of salvation, and rejected the creating God, the God of the Jews. In reading Christianity in terms of salvation alone, he must have agreed with large numbers of early Gentile Christians; in rejecting the God of the Jews he was a theologian, drawing what seemed to him the necessary consequences of his saving gospel.

The presence in the church of the second century of Marcion and his followers, as well as of their fellow heretics, the Gnostics, who also rejected the God of the Jews on grounds to be referred to later, goes to show that conversion to Christianity did not necessarily carry with it the acceptance of the God of the Jews. Had it done so, their attitude would have been difficult, not to say impossible. At any rate, if Jewish monotheism was an essential element in Chris-

[1] Ibid., I, 17.
[2] Tertullian, op. cit., I, 15; Irenæus, IV, 3, 1.

tianity, and to be a Christian meant to believe in the Jewish God, they could not have regarded themselves in good faith as Christians. As it was, the option was evidently open to them of accepting or rejecting the God of the Jews, and it took the most strenuous exertions of Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and other theologians to prove them wrong.

Even before Marcion and the great Gnostic theologians appeared upon the scene, there were apparently many Christians who declined to accept the God of the Jews, as is suggested by the admonitory words of Polycarp, written probably about 120 A. D.: "Wherefore girding up your loins serve God in fear and truth, forsaking idle talk and the error of the many and believing in him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and gave him glory and a throne at his right hand."[1] To which may be added his words in chapter 12: "To all under heaven that shall believe in our Lord and God Jesus Christ and in his Father who raised him from the dead."

Similarly Ignatius, writing a short time earlier, implies that there were atheists, from his point of view, within the Christian circle; that is, it would seem, persons who believed in Christ but not in God. "If, as some affirm who are atheists (ἄθεοι), that is unbelievers (ἄπιστοι), he suffered only in semblance, being themselves

[1] To the Philippians, chap. 2.

mere semblance, why am I a prisoner and why do I also desire to fight with beasts?"[1] In the next chapter Ignatius says of these docetists, "They are not the planting of the Father," with which may be compared 1 John 4:2–3: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God."

The first Epistle of John, indeed, seems to have been written, in part at least, to protest against the denial of the Jewish God by Christians of Asia Minor late in the first or early in the second century. Throughout the epistle the emphasis is not on the lordship of Jesus, but on his divine sonship or relation to God the Father. The word Lord, which is found frequently in the fourth Gospel, does not occur in 1 John, and seems to have been deliberately avoided. On the other hand, the phrase "Son of God" appears more often in 1 John than in any other part of the New Testament of like extent, and it is clear that the author was concerned to assert Jesus' divine sonship in opposition to those who were denying it. It is commonly taken for granted that this was in the interest of Christ, but I think it was rather in the interest of God. This alone accords with the anti-docetic polemic of the epistle, for the docetists did not deny the divinity of Christ, but his humanity. What troubled the author was not that Christians

[1] To the Trallians, chap. 10.

were denying Christ, but were denying God and refusing to go beyond Christ. At the beginning of the epistle the writer says: "We have seen and bear witness and declare unto you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." And further on: "Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" that is, denies Jesus' connection with the Jewish God. "This is the antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son. Every one that denieth the Son is without the Father also; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also. What ye heard from the beginning (that Jesus was sent by God?) let that abide in you. If what ye heard from the beginning abide in you ye shall also abide in the Son and the Father" (2 : 22–24). "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (and so was connected historically with the Jewish people) is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God" (4 : 2–3). "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us not" (4 : 6). "Herein was the love of God manifested in us that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a propitiation for our sins" (4 : 9–10). "God is love, and he that abid-

eth in love abideth in God and God in him" (4 : 16). May it be that the author was commending the love of God to his readers because some of them thought of him as Marcion later did, as a stern and severe God, and were thus not attracted by him? "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God" (4 : 15). "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (5 : 1). "Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, our faith. Who is the one that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (5 : 4–5). If one believes in Jesus' divine sonship, one becomes a child of the God of all the world, and so wins the victory over it. "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that ye may know that ye have eternal life—unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God" (5 : 12–13).

The writer asserts that "Every one that is begotten of God sinneth not" (5 : 18; 3 : 9), and he distinguishes from the children of God the children of the devil who do sin (3 : 8 ff.), apparently referring to certain Christian brethren. May it be that the disciples who did not recognize the God of the Jews and hence did not accept the Old Testament, were less punctilious in their moral conduct than their fellow Chris-

tians, or governed their lives by other standards, and hence seemed gross offenders to the author of the epistle? And may it be that their presence caused strife and division and led him to emphasize love and to declare that love is of God and exists only among those begotten of God? May it be, also, that the significance of his words about light and darkness (1:5 ff.; 2:9 ff.) lies here: that he who believes in the God of all the world finds everything illuminated, while he whose faith does not go beyond salvation through Christ remains in darkness?

However that may be, the author of 1 John was apparently interested to protest against a form of Christianity which made not too little of Christ but too little of God; and when we realize this we appreciate the significance of the apparently irrelevant words with which the epistle closes: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

As early as Paul's time there would seem to have been Christians who did not believe in the one God of the Jews, or, at any rate, had not ceased to believe in the existence of other gods, as is made evident by the passage in 1 Cor. 8:4–7: "Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no God but one. For though there be that are called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as there are gods many and lords many, for us there is

one God the Father, of whom are all things and we unto him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him. Howbeit the knowledge is not in all, but some being until now accustomed to the idol, eat as if of a thing sacrificed to idols." With this may be compared Paul's words in 1 Cor. 15:34: "Some are ignorant of God. I say it to your shame"; and again: "We beg on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20), suggesting that some of the readers had accepted Christ without accepting God.

It may have been due to this that Paul has so much to say in his epistles about belief in God and so frequently emphasizes the connection of Christ with God. Thus, for instance: "Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, also of Gentiles, if indeed God is one who shall justify the circumcision of faith and the uncircumcision through faith." "It was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but on our account also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." "Even so reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good." "That with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God and the Spirit

of God dwelleth in you?" "All things are yours and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that subjected all things unto him, that God may be all in all."

It may be objected that if there were Gentile Christians who did not accept the God of the Jews, Paul would not have contented himself with references of so casual a sort, but would have denounced and condemned them in unsparing terms, as he did the Judaizers. It should be noticed, however, that such Christians as I have been speaking of accepted Jesus Christ as their saviour and were thus one with Paul in the chief matter. Moreover, it is not necessary to suppose that they attacked the God of the Jews as Marcion later did and carried on an active propaganda against him. They may simply have neglected or ignored him, finding all they needed in Jesus Christ, and the evil consequences of their attitude may have become apparent only after the lapse of time, partly in their disregard of the moral law, partly in the growth of serious friction between those who worshipped God and those who did not.

It is exactly this state of things to which one of the latest of Paul's epistles, the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians, seems to point.

It was perhaps addressed to Laodicea (not Ephesus), or it may have been a circular letter intended for more than one church in that part of Asia.[1] In either case the readers were evidently largely Gentile Christians, but not converts of Paul's own, though it is clear that he had an intimate knowledge of their situation. What the readers seem particularly to have needed instruction in was their relation to God. At the very beginning Paul emphasizes God's part in salvation and prays that his readers may have knowledge of him: the hope of his calling, the glory of his inheritance, the greatness of his power. It was God who had made them alive and raised them up with Christ, for salvation was not their own work but the gift of God, and they were God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works. Separated from Christ, they had been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and the covenants of the promise, having no hope and no God in the world; but now they were made nigh in the blood of Christ, whose purpose it was to break down the enmity between Jews and Gentiles and reconcile them both in one body unto God, so that they were no more strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, being builded together in Christ for a habitation of God.

[1] See my History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age, p. 379.

Later in the epistle Paul exhorts his readers to walk no longer as the Gentiles do, in the vanity of their mind, darkened in their understanding and alienated from the life of God; to put on the new man according to the will of God; to be imitators of God;[1] to avoid all uncleanness and walk as children of light, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness;[2] and to put on the whole armor of God, for their wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places.[3]

The Epistle to the Colossians, written at about the same time as Ephesians, resembles it closely and seems in certain parts to be governed by the same interest,[4] but again it is more concerned to magnify Christ.[5] Comparing the epistles as a whole, we see that in Colossians it is Christ, while in Ephesians it is God who is made most of. In writing both epistles Paul had in mind, it would seem, the tendency to accept Christ without accepting God, but the Colossians apparently needed to be particularly reminded of their relation to Christ; those for whom Ephesians was intended of their relation to God.

[1] Eph. 5 : 1; Paul's only use of this phrase.
[2] Eph. 5 : 8–11; a passage that reminds us of 1 John 1 : 5 ff.
[3] In connection with this interpretation of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, it is interesting to refer to Tertullian's discussion of the epistle in his work against Marcion, v. 17.
[4] Cf. Col. 1 : 3–13; 3 : 1 ff.
[5] Col. 1 : 15 ff.

In support of the assumption that there were Christians in the primitive church whose God was Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone, attention may be called to the continued use of the original formula of baptism in his name. That this formula preceded the triune formula of Matt. 28 : 19 may be taken for granted. In my book on the Apostles' Creed I suggested that between this primitive formula and the triune formula of Matthew there may have been a threefold formula, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, which marked an intermediate step, and came into use when the gospel was preached to the Gentiles and it seemed necessary to have them affirm their faith in God as well as in Christ.[1] Whether or not this particular formula was ever in use, at any rate the triune formula of Matthew—Father, Son, and Spirit—became the prevailing one and ultimately crowded out the original and simple formula altogether. But the latter was used in certain heretical sects for a number of generations. According to Cyprian, the Marcionites and other heretics of his day baptized in the name of Christ alone instead of using the triune formula.[2] Cyprian contended that those who had been baptized by heretics, whether in the name of Christ alone or in the

[1] See my Apostles' Creed, pp. 181 ff., where I argue, also, that it was upon this formula rather than upon the formula of Matthew that the Old Roman Symbol, the original of our Apostles' Creed, was based.

[2] See Cyprian, Epistles, 73 : 4, 16; 74 : 5, 7 ff. (Hartel's edition of Cyprian's works, vol. II). The primitive formula appears also in the Acts of Paul and Thecla, chap. 34 (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

triune name, should be rebaptized on entering the Catholic church (Ep. 75:7 ff.); but the author of the pseudo-Cyprianic tract on rebaptism maintained that to rebaptize them was unnecessary and would be an innovation, and, therefore, opposed Cyprian's position.[1]

Although the simpler formula was still in use in the time of Ambrose,[2] it seems to have been rare when Augustine wrote his work on baptism, for he says: "Heretics are more easily found who do not baptize at all than any that baptize without these words," i. e., Father, Son, and Spirit.[3]

However that may be, it is certainly more likely that the Marcionites and other heretics of Cyprian's day were following a practice which had continued unbroken from the beginning than that they or their predecessors had revived a practice which in the meantime had been everywhere abandoned. But where the practice existed among Gentile Christians, it would seem they must have been interested in Christ alone, and whether or not they were hostile to the God of the Jews, as Marcion and the Gnostics later were, at any rate counted Christ alone their God. Of course the use of the simple formula among the early Jewish disciples meant that they and their fellow countrymen already believed in God, and hence did not need to be

[1] On Rebaptism, chaps. 1, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12 ff.
[2] Cf. Ambrose, On the Holy Spirit, I, 3.
[3] Augustine, On Baptism, VI, 25:47.

baptized into his name. But in the Gentile world the situation was altogether different.

Another and still more important circumstance throwing light upon the primitive situation is the wide currency in the second century of the form of Christianity commonly called Modalism, the belief, namely, that Christ is himself the supreme God, the Father of the world and of men. In his Philosophumena, or Refutation of all Heresies, referring to one of the so-called Modalists, Hippolytus says: "Cleomenes and his followers say that he (i. e., Christ) is the God and Father of the universe." [1] In his work Against Noetus, Hippolytus says: "He declared that Christ was himself the Father, and that the Father himself was born and suffered and died." [2] Similarly, in his work Against Praxeas, another representative of the same group, Tertullian says: "He says that the Father himself came down into the Virgin, was himself born of her, himself suffered, indeed was himself Jesus Christ"; [3] and again: "The simple, that I may not call them the ignorant and uneducated, who are always the majority of believers, because even the rule of faith itself turns the mind from the world's many gods to the one only true God, not understanding that

[1] Refutatio omnium hæresium, IX, 10: 12 (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte, vol. 26; in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, book IX, chap. 5).

[2] Against Noetus, chap 1. Cf. Philosophumena, IX, 10 (IX, 5).

[3] Against Praxeas, chap. 1.

he is indeed one but must be believed together with his economy, are afraid of the economy . . . and thus they accuse us of preaching two and three gods, while they claim that they are worshippers of one God." [1]

Tertullian and Hippolytus were writing early in the third century, but the identification of Christ with the Father was much older than they, as is shown by a sentence in the first apology of Justin Martyr, written about 150: "For those who say the Son is Father are proved neither to be acquainted with the Father nor to know that the Father of the universe has a son, who, being Logos and first born of God, is God." [2]

If the Christians of whom these writers speak had once believed in the supreme God as the Father of Christ and another being than he, they could hardly have abandoned the belief and contented themselves with Jesus alone as they were doing. Those to whom Tertullian refers as "the simple, who are always the majority of believers" were certainly not innovators. They were of the rank and file, ordinary Christians, not theologians, and the last thing they would have done was to introduce new and radical ideas. They must have been lineal descendants of primitive Gentile Christians, who from the beginning found all they craved in Jesus

[1] Op. cit., chap. 3. Cf. also Origen, Against Celsus, VIII, 14.
[2] Apology, I, 63.

Christ and sought no other god beyond and above him. The formulation of this primitive attitude in a theological doctrine known as Modalism was due to influences that will be referred to in the next lecture.

Before bringing this lecture to a close, it is perhaps worth while to call attention to a singular circumstance not altogether without significance for the subject I have been discussing. In most of our early Christian literature, aside from the New Testament, there is an extraordinary lack of vivid and fervent piety, such as distinguishes the Psalms and some of the great prophets. Except in certain Jewish Christian writings, as, e. g., the Odes of Solomon, if it be a Christian document at all and not a Jewish psalter worked over by a Christian, there is almost nothing of the kind to be found in Christian documents of the first three centuries.

In 1 Clement (chaps. 59–61) there is inserted a long and eloquent prayer to God, but it is largely of a formal character and filled with reminiscences of the Old Testament, and it tells us little of the personal piety either of Clement himself (if he was its author) or of his Christian contemporaries. In the Didache there are brief eucharistic prayers, also addressed to God, but in none of them is the note of piety particularly fervent or vivid. They run as follows:

"We give thanks unto Thee, our Father, for

the holy vine of David, thy child, which thou didst make known unto us through Jesus thy child. To thee be the glory forever." "We give thanks unto thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou didst make known unto us through Jesus thy child. To thee be the glory forever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so let thy church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into thy kingdom. For thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever." "We give thanks unto thee, holy Father, for the holy name which thou didst make to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which thou didst make known unto us through Jesus thy child. To thee be the glory forever. Thou, Master almighty, didst create all things for thy name's sake, and didst give food and drink to men for their enjoyment, that they might give thanks unto thee, but us didst thou bless with spiritual food and drink and life eternal through thy child. Before all things we give thanks unto thee that thou art mighty. To thee be the glory forever. Remember, Lord, thy church to deliver it from evil and to perfect it in thy love; and gather it together, the sanctified church, from the four winds into the kingdom which thou hast prepared for it. For thine is the power and the glory forever. Let grace come and this world pass away. Hosanna to the

God of David. If any one is holy let him come; if any one is not, let him repent. Maranatha. Amen" (chaps. 9–10).

The same is true of the prayer offered by Polycarp at the time of his martyrdom. "Lord God Almighty, the Father of thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received the knowledge of thee; God of angels and of powers and of all creation and of the whole race of the righteous who live before thee; I bless thee that thou hast counted me worthy of this day and hour, that I might receive a portion among the number of the martyrs in the cup of Christ unto resurrection of eternal life both of soul and of body in incorruptibility of the Holy Spirit; among whom may I be received before thee to-day in a sacrifice rich and acceptable as thou didst prepare it beforehand and make it manifest and accomplish it, thou faithful and true God. For this and for all things I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee through the eternal and heavenly high priest Jesus Christ, thy beloved child, through whom to thee with him and the Holy Spirit be glory both now and forever. Amen." [1] The prayer sounds over-formal for such an occasion, and was probably composed by the author of the work.

If Christian piety is to be measured by such prayers, and they are representative of many

[1] Martyrdom of Polycarp, chap. 14.

others,[1] it must be said that it was a cold and colorless thing in the Gentile churches of early generations. But we know, on the contrary, that during those generations Christian piety was very warm and vivid and vital. The extraordinary spiritual manifestations, the miracles, the martyrdoms, all bear witness to the enthusiastic quality of it. But it failed to come to expression in literature, even in the martyrologies, where one might most expect to find it.

It is not simply that the recorded prayers, of which there are many, lack the quality of deep personal devotion—this might mean little, as most of them were for use in the services of the church—but there is an extraordinary paucity of devotional language of any kind and in any connection. Sermons, letters, apologies, theological and polemic treatises, books on church order and discipline, and practical tracts in abundance have come down to us from the Gentile Christianity of the first three centuries, but not a single devotional writing and hardly a devotional passage, aside from the formal prayers, in the vast mass of the literature of the period. Clement of Alexandria has many beautiful things to say about prayer, as, for instance, in his eloquent description of a Christian Gnostic in the seventh book of his Stro-

[1] Cf., e. g., the long prayer in Arnobius's work Against the Heathen, I, 31, which is a splendid utterance, but for the most part breathes the language of philosophy rather than religion.

mata: "Living our whole life as a festival, persuaded that God is everywhere present, we praise while we farm, we hymn while we sail, in the rest of our life we conduct ourselves carefully. The Gnostic dwells close to God, being at the same time grave and cheerful in all things, grave because his mind is set on the divine, cheerful because he reflects upon the human benefits which God has bestowed upon us. . . . Prayer, then, to speak more boldly, is conversation with God. And if we whisper and without opening the lips speak in silence, we cry inwardly. For God hears unceasingly all the utterances of the heart. . . . If some assign fixed hours to prayer, as for instance the third and sixth and ninth, the Gnostic prays his whole life long, striving by prayer to have fellowship with God." [1] But even Clement, for all his eloquence, seldom indulges in devotional language of a moving kind.

The only father of the period, so far as I am aware, whose piety found vivid and burning expression in his writings, was Ignatius of Antioch, early in the second century. His piety, which was nourished, it would seem, rather upon Jesus Christ than upon God the Father, voices itself in such a passage as the following:

[1] Stromata, VII, chap. VII, 35 : 6–7; 39 : 6; 40 : 3. Cf. also chap. XII, 73 : 1; 78 : 5–6; Protrepticus, 10, 12; and Pædagogus, III, 12. The references to Clement of Alexandria are given according to the Prussian Academy's edition of his works (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte).

"May naught of things visible and invisible envy me that I may attain unto Jesus Christ. Let there come upon me fire and cross and struggles with wild beasts, cutting, mangling, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushing of the whole body, cruel tortures of the devil, if only I may attain to Jesus Christ. The ends of the universe and the kingdoms of the world shall profit me nothing. It is better to suffer for Christ Jesus than to rule over the ends of the earth. Him I seek who died on our behalf. Him I desire who rose for us. The pains of birth are upon me. Suffer me, brethren. Do not hinder me from living; do not wish me to die. Do not give to the world one who desires to belong to God, nor deceive him with material things. Suffer me to receive the true light. When I am come thither, then shall I be a man. Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. If any man hath him within himself let him understand what I desire and let him sympathize with me, knowing the things that straiten me." [1]

If such piety toward Christ found frequent expression in the literature of the early church, it would be easy to explain the situation on the ground that Christ was the real God of the early Christians and the Father God only a theological abstraction. But except in the writings of Ignatius piety toward Christ finds no larger and no more vivid expression than piety toward God.

[1] Ignatius, Epistle to the Romans, chaps. 5–6.

The prayers to Christ, of which there are many, are of the same general texture as the prayers to God, and there is an almost equal absence of religious fervor in speaking of the former as of the latter. In these circumstances I can only suggest that the lack may have been due to the divided object of worship. The singleness of devotion felt by the Jews toward Jehovah may have been difficult for a Christian whose real God was Jesus Christ, but who was compelled to subordinate him to another God, a theological or philosophical figure—as will appear in the next lecture—not at all calculated to arouse deep personal devotion.

It is instructive in this connection to remind ourselves of the attitude of the great Augustine of the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Augustine came into the Christian church from Neoplatonism, bringing his Neoplatonic piety with him, and Christ was always of minor importance to him compared with God. For the first time apparently since Paul and the early Christians of Jewish antecedents, God, not Christ, was the primary object of devotion. Of his devotion to God he has given us a magnificent monument in his Confessions. It will suffice to quote a few familiar passages from the early pages of the work: "Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in thee" (I, 1). "Who will grant me to find rest in thee? Who will grant me that

thou mayst come into my heart and inebriate it that I may forget my ills and embrace thee, my one good? What art thou to me? Have compassion that I may speak. What am I myself to thee that thou commandest me to love thee, and unless I do it thou art angry with me and threatenest great sorrows? Is it itself a small sorrow if I do not love thee? Ah, me. Tell me by thy pity, Lord my God, what thou art to me. Tell my soul 'I am thy salvation.' So speak that I may hear. Behold the ears of my heart are before thee, Lord; open them and tell my soul, 'I am thy salvation.' May I run after thy voice and lay hold on thee. Hide not thy face from me. Let me die, lest I die, that I may see thy face. Cramped is the dwelling of my soul. That thou mayst enter it, let it be enlarged by thee. In ruins is it, do thou rebuild it. It has what may offend thine eyes, I confess and am aware. But who will cleanse it? Or to whom else shall I cry but to thee?" [1]

To return to the subject of the lecture: I cannot say more now upon the God of the primitive Gentile Christians. I recognize the precarious nature of much of the evidence I have been adducing, and the delicacy of judgment required to give it its just weight, but for myself I cannot resist the conclusion that there was such a primitive Christianity as I have described—a

[1] Confessions, book 1, chaps. 5–6.

Christianity whose God was Jesus Christ alone —and as we go on we shall discover, I think, added reason for assuming its existence.

As I remarked a few moments ago, hitherto historians have confined themselves to the problem, how to explain the addition of the worship of Christ to the worship of God. If my reading of the early situation is correct, another problem of equal importance is how to explain the addition of the worship of God to the worship of Christ. To that problem I propose to address myself in the next lecture.

LECTURE III

THE GOD OF THE THEOLOGIANS

IN the previous lecture I showed that the God of the primitive Gentile Christians, or, at any rate, of many of them, was Jesus Christ; that they began with him and only afterward associated him with the God of the Jews and worshipped two divine beings, Son and Father. In the present lecture I wish to trace this development and explain the addition of God the Father to the original object of worship, the Lord Jesus Christ. Many writers have described the process by which Christ came to be associated with the God of the Jews, and to be thought of as the second person of the Trinity, subordinate only to God the Father, and I shall not repeat the story here. I am interested, rather, in the other problem and shall confine myself to that. So far as I am aware, it has hitherto entirely escaped notice. How, then, did it come about that Christians who originally worshipped Jesus Christ alone were led to worship also the God of the Jews and even to subordinate Christ to him, as a son to a father?

Speaking generally, I should explain the addition of the worship of God to the worship of Christ as due chiefly to propagandists, apolo-

gists, and theologians. As I said in the last lecture, multitudes of the Gentile Christians were probably quite satisfied with the Lord Jesus Christ. They were assured by their own personal experience of salvation through him; more than this they did not crave. But at an early day there were already within the Christian circle men of broader vision and wider interests, and as time passed their number steadily increased. To such persons it was not enough to stop with Jesus, a personal saviour. If the new religion was to be given world-wide significance, it must be brought into a larger setting. The doctrine of salvation must be made part of a system embracing the universe as a whole, and the Saviour Christ must be related in some way to the divine forces which lie back of the world or find expression in it. Otherwise Christianity would be inferior to Judaism, from which it had sprung; otherwise, indeed, it would be inferior even to some of the mystery cults.

The Apostle Paul was one of these broader-visioned Christians, and he found in Jewish monotheism the larger setting he required. From the beginning Christ was for him not an independent being, but the son and representative of God himself, the God of Israel, the creator and ruler of the world. Thus Christianity was given at least as universal a significance as Judaism itself. With less than this, of course, Paul could not possibly have been satisfied.

It is significant that Paul not only recognized Christ's connection with the God of Israel, the God of all the earth, but also brought him into direct relation with the creation of the world. "To us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him." [1] "Who is an image of the invisible God, firstborn of every creature; for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist." [2]

Paul also represented Christ as reigning over all things: God "made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and he put all things in subjection under his feet." [3] "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." [4]

Similarly Paul gave Christ a part in the last judgment. Thus he says: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that each may receive the things done through the body, whether good or evil." [5]

[1] 1 Cor. 8:6. [2] Col. 1:15–17.
[3] Eph. 1:20–22; cf. 2:9 ff. [4] 1 Cor. 15:25. [5] 2 Cor. 5:10.

Paul's interest in thus emphasizing Christ's larger relationships seems abundantly evident. Christianity, he wished to show, is a religion of world-wide and universal significance, the one only saving cult, for its Lord is not merely a saviour, and one saviour among many—he is the son of the God of all the earth, intimately associated with him from the beginning to the end, in creating, in ruling, and in judging.

As a Jew, Paul naturally met the need of bringing Christianity into a larger setting by recognizing Christ's connection with the God of the Jews, who was at the same time the God of all the earth. But his way of meeting the need was not so inevitable to a Gentile thinker, unless he had already come under the influence of Judaism and accepted the Jewish God. In some way Christianity must be brought into a larger setting, but in what way was by no means always clear.

Paul's solution of the problem was the nearest at hand, and, of course, suggested itself at once. Christianity took its rise within Judaism, and the parent system contained a cosmology and a philosophy of history of the most impressive kind. Its God, so the Jews claimed, was not merely their God, one among many national deities, but the creator and ruler of the world. If Christ were brought into connection with him, the new religion had at once the larger setting it required. It was no longer simply one among

many saving cults abroad in the Roman empire; it was the culmination of the ages, the goal of history, and the explanation of all existence. This grandiose conception of Christianity was Paul's own, and it was shared in course of time by other men of vision, sometimes under his influence, sometimes independently of him, as, for instance, by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who was also a Jew, as Paul was. Where this solution prevailed Christianity was a monotheistic faith—monotheistic, that is, not in the sense that it recognized only a single divine being—for the divinity of Christ was not questioned—but in the sense that its God was the God of all the earth, and its saviour the saviour of all men: one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ.

Many Gentile Christians might have little interest in thus emphasizing the larger relations of Christianity and making a monotheistic faith of it, but they could also have little objection to the proceeding, provided in the process they did not lose the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone was essential to them. The attitude of the so-called Modalists, to whom reference was made in the previous lecture, is significant in this connection. They were the successors, we may fairly assume, of primitive Christians who were interested in Christ only as a saviour and were not concerned to put him in a larger setting. But the Modalists themselves, living in a theological

age, identified Jesus Christ with God the Father; that is, they insisted that if Christianity were to be given the larger setting, Christ himself, and not some one else, must be recognized as the supreme God. They were concerned not so much to identify Christ with the Father as to prevent his subordination to any other god. Whatever values Christians sought in God they believed were to be found in Christ, and, therefore, if a creating god were demanded—God the Father of the world and men—this Father God was Christ himself. To many theologians, on the other hand, breathing, as they did, the philosophical atmosphere of the day, it seemed quite incredible that Jesus Christ could be himself the supreme God, that the creator and ruler of the world could appear as a man upon earth and suffer and die as Jesus had done. Thus Justin Martyr says:

"I suppose I have said often enough that when my God says 'God went up from Abraham,' or 'the Lord spake to Moses,' and 'the Lord came down to see the tower which the sons of men had built,' or 'God shut Noah within the ark,' you must not imagine that the unbegotten God himself came down or went up anywhere. For the ineffable Father and Lord of all neither comes anywhere nor walks nor sleeps nor rises up, but remains in his own place, wherever that may be, quick to behold and quick to hear, not with eyes nor ears but with indescribable power. And he sees all things and knows all things, and

none of us is hidden from him. And he is not moved or confined to a place or to the whole world, for he was even before the world was made. How then could he talk with any one or be seen by any one or appear in the smallest part of the earth, when the people at Sinai were not able to look on the glory even of the one who was sent by him, and Moses himself could not enter into the tabernacle which he had made when it was filled with the glory of God, and the priest could not endure to stand before the temple when Solomon carried the ark into the house at Jerusalem which Solomon himself had built? Therefore not Abraham nor Isaac nor Jacob nor any other man saw the Father and ineffable Lord of all and of Christ himself as well, but they saw him who according to his will was at once God, his Son, and the angel who ministered to his will, and who it pleased him should be born man by the virgin; who also was fire when he spoke with Moses from the bush." [1]

Similarly Tertullian says:

"How is it that the omnipotent, invisible God, whom no man hath seen or can see, who inhabiteth light inaccessible, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, at whose sight the earth trembles and the mountains melt like wax, who holdeth the whole world in his hand as in a nest, whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is the earth, in whom is every place and he in none,

[1] Dialogue with Trypho, chap. 127; cf. chaps. 56 ff.

who is the extreme boundary of the universe—how is it, I say, that the Most High should have walked at evening in paradise seeking Adam, and should have closed the ark after Noah's entrance, and at Abraham's should have cooled himself under an oak, and should have called to Moses from out the burning bush, and should have appeared as the fourth in the furnace of the Babylonian king (though he is called there the son of man), unless these things were an image and a type and an allegory? These things indeed could not have been believed even of the Son of God, had they not been written; perhaps they could not have been believed of the Father even had they been written. For these persons bring him down into Mary's womb, place him at Pilate's tribunal, and shut him in the tomb of Joseph. Hence their error becomes evident. For, being ignorant that from the beginning the entire order of the divine administration has had its course through the Son, they believe that the Father himself was seen and conversed and worked and thirsted and suffered hunger, in spite of the prophet who says 'The eternal God shall neither thirst at all nor be hungry,' much more shall he not die or be buried. Thus they believe that it was always one God, the Father, who did the things which were really done through the Son." [1]

[1] Tertullian, Against Praxeas, chap. 16. In his tract, On the Flesh of Christ, directed against docetism, Tertullian followed quite a different line, insisting that God was born and suffered

There is a good deal of this sort of thing in the theological literature of the second and third centuries.[1] That the supreme God himself should appear upon earth seemed wholly incredible to the philosophically minded. If Christianity, therefore, were to have the larger setting that was needed, it was evident that Christ must be recognized not as the supreme God himself, but as his representative or agent or messenger. The relationship between him and God was commonly expressed by calling him the Son of God, as Paul had already done with a different motive altogether, or, in philosophical terms, the Logos, as he was called in the prologue of the fourth Gospel.[2]

Christ is referred to as the Son of God (or "the Son," "his Son," "my Son") not only

and died, that, in fact, he could be and do anything he wished (On the Flesh of Christ, chaps. 3–5; so also in his work Against Marcion, II, 16, 27). Of course there was no real contradiction, for Tertullian was referring in both cases to the Son, not the Father, but it is evident that when the situation did not demand the language of philosophy he could abandon it and talk like any common man. The contrast in this respect between him and Origen is noticeable. Cf. Origen, Against Celsus, VII, 15, 16.

[1] Cf., for instance, Theophilus, II, 22; Irenæus IV, 6:6; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, V, chaps. XI–XII; Origen, Against Celsus, VII, 15 ff.

[2] Christ was called the Logos, a current philosophical term, in the prologue of the fourth Gospel (cf. also Rev. 19:13), in Ignatius (Mag., 8:2), in the Epistle to Diognetus (11:2, 3), and frequently in the writings of the apologists and other theologians (e. g., Justin, Apology, I, 10, and often; Tatian 5, 7; Athenagoras, 4, 6; Theophilus, II, 10, 22; Irenæus, IV, 6, 38; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, V, chap. III, 16; Origen, De principiis, I, 2:3; Against Celsus, II, 9; V, 24, etc.). On the use of the term Logos by the early Christians, see Bousset, Kyrios Christos, pp. 375 ff.

in Paul's epistles but in all the other writings of the New Testament except the Pastoral Epistles, James, 1 Peter, 3 John, and Jude, in all the Apostolic Fathers except Polycarp and 2 Clement,[1] in the apologists, and in most Christian documents from the second century on. The phrase might often be used merely as a current designation of Christ, with no thought of any special significance attaching to it, but it was also employed deliberately to indicate his subordination to God or his position as God's agent or representative or Logos.[2]

The current use of the term Son of God for Christ made it possible for theologians to bring Christianity into connection with the God of all the world without breaking with Christian tradition and at the same time without committing the philosophical crime of assuming that he had appeared upon earth and had taken on human form.

But in spite of Christian tradition, to call Christ the Son of God and distinguish him from God the Father might easily seem to degrade him by making him of only secondary rather

[1] In 1 Clement, to be sure, Christ is called Son of God only once (36:4) in connection with a quotation from the Psalms, and in the Didache only in the triune formula of baptism (chap. 7); but the title occurs frequently in Barnabas, Ignatius, and particularly in Hermas. In Hermas, where the phrase Son of God is very common, the name Christ does not appear, except possibly in Vis., II, 2:8.

[2] Cf., for instance, the passages quoted above (pp. 94, 95) from Justin Martyr and Tertullian, and also Athenagoras, 10; Theophilus, II, 22; Irenæus, IV, 6.

than primary worth. As a matter of fact, it was actually resented by many, as, for instance, by the Modalists, of whom I have just spoken. And so it came about that in the theological discussions that eventuated in the establishment of the doctrine of the Trinity, the exponents of the doctrine were interested always to show that it did not make Christ less and lower than God. To have done so would have doomed the doctrine with the great mass of pious Christians. To convince them that to call Christ the Son of God was not to make him less divine and less the saviour of men than to call him simply God was absolutely essential. Compared with this, the later controversy with the Arians, who were magnifying the contrast between Christ and God, was mere child's play. In arguing against them Athanasius and his confrères could appeal to age-long Christian piety. On the other hand, in arguing against the Modalists for a distinction between Christ and God the Father, theologians like Tertullian and his successors had Christian piety against them. "What evil am I doing in glorifying Christ?" was the question of the Modalist Noetus, who was identifying Christ with the supreme God.[1] Though the earlier controversy has left no such extended records as the later, we must not be blind to its significance. The outcome of it was that the theologians actually succeeded in convincing the

[1] Hippolytus, Against Noetus, chap. 1.

mass of Christians—how they did it is one of the mysteries of history—that to call Christ Son instead of Father and to give him the second place in the godhead was not to make him any less divine, or in any way to offend against Christian piety. That they succeeded in doing so simply shows how little, after all, the mass of Christians were interested in the larger questions—world creation and world control—and how absorbed they were—as they are still, for that matter—in personal salvation.

The recognition of Christ as the Son of the Jewish God was not the only answer to the need I have been speaking of: the need, felt particularly by theologians and apologists, of bringing Christianity into a larger setting and giving it a universal significance. An altogether different answer was given by the Gnostics, whose leaders were among the greatest Christian theologians of the second century. Like other Christians, they recognized Christ as a saviour, but, like other theologians, they could not rest content therewith. They, too, felt compelled to read Christianity in larger terms, and to make it part of a great cosmological and soteriological scheme. As other theologians found what they needed in an already existing system, namely, Judaism, the Gnostics found what they needed in an already existing system of an entirely different sort, for it is now universally recognized

that Gnosticism antedates Christianity and was not the original creation of Valentinus, Basilides, and the other Christian Gnostics.

Judaism and Gnosticism were at opposite poles, the one from the other. Judaism was monotheistic, recognizing God as the creator and ruler of the world, while Gnosticism was dualistic, setting the world over against God and assigning it another origin altogether. The dualism of the Gnostics was not a side issue with them, but a fundamental tenet of their philosophy. Interpreting the Platonic contrast between matter and spirit, the visible and the invisible, in the light of the radical Oriental dualism of the good and the bad, they regarded spirit and matter not simply as higher and lower orders of existence, but as always and necessarily enemies. The whole material universe they condemned as essentially and irremediably bad, and their great problem was to find a way of release for the spirit of man from the evil environment in which he is imprisoned. In the effort to explain his imprisonment therein and to make possible his escape therefrom, many of them bridged the chasm between spirit and matter with a complicated series of divine emanations or æons. In connection with these, they developed an elaborate mythology which gave the various Gnostic systems an extremely polytheistic aspect and afforded abundant opportunity for caricature.

Their great problem, I have said, was to find a way of release for the spirit of man from the evil environment in which he is imprisoned. Paul's doctrine of redemption through Christ, which meant the believer's escape from the flesh to live a new life in the Spirit, exactly met their need, and multitudes of them came over into the Christian Church, as multitudes of the Jews had done on altogether different grounds. As the latter read Christianity in the light of the Judaism from which they had come, so the Gnostics read it in the light of Gnosticism, and when they felt it important to bring it into a larger setting and give it a universal significance, it was not Judaism they connected it with, but the elaborate cosmology and soteriology of the particular Gnostic system which they accepted. These systems were many, for the Gnostics differed widely among themselves and were divided into numerous sects, but at bottom they were one, namely in their dualism and in their recognition of redemption from the world and the flesh as the great need of man.

In the Christian church of the second century the two theologies, Jewish and Gnostic, stood over against each other, rival interpretations of the place of Christianity in the history of the world and of man. The Gnostic theology had the advantage of the Jewish in being entirely free from all national and racial entanglements, and in being relieved of the necessity of distinguish-

ing between the permanent and temporary elements of a great historic religion, in order to justify the retention of a part of it and the rejection of the rest. But it had the disadvantage of sacrificing the moral precepts and the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, and the doctrine of divine providence, which was so dear to Jesus. It also had the disadvantage of being polytheistic and mythological in its doctrine of æons, which was an important element in the teaching of many of the Gnostics. Of this mythological scheme Christ was made a part, being identified with one of the æons and thus given a place, though not always the same place, in the variegated series of divine emanations. This must have seemed particularly offensive to common Christian sentiment, as tending to degrade the Lord Jesus Christ and remove him from his place of pre-eminence. As between the two theologies, indeed, the Jewish, which made Christ the Son of God, and the Gnostic, which made him one of a vast number of divine emanations, the former must have been far less obnoxious to the mass of Christians. However that may be, the whole system of æons was denounced as polytheistic and was made the chief ground of attack by the theological opponents of the Gnostics.

That monotheism, as distinguished from polytheism, meant much to the rank and file we can hardly believe, but its importance to the theologians is abundantly evident from many writ-

ings. In opposition to the prevailing polytheism of the age, they laid the greatest emphasis on monotheism, and in controversy with the Gnostics they did the same thing, finding in their complicated systems of divine æons a particularly offensive form of polytheism, just because it was brought into connection with Christianity and was claimed to have Christian sanction. Possibly the Christian recognition of Jesus as Lord which these monotheistic theologians never thought of questioning made them peculiarly sensitive on the subject of monotheism. At any rate, their constant emphasis upon monotheism in their controversy with the Gnostics is out of all proportion to its importance, for as between them and the Gnostics the difference was only a matter of degree; while the latter had many divine beings, they had two. The truth is, although, in opposition to Gnosticism and to the common polytheism of the day, the theologians had much to say about monotheism, it was not really monotheism as such that they were interested in, but a particular form of monotheism which meant the connection of Christianity with the creator and ruler of the world.

Perhaps even more obnoxious than the polytheism of the Gnostics was their denial of the resurrection of the flesh. The doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh was regarded by most Christians as the essential condition of a future life, and to deny it seemed to destroy all incen-

tive to Christian living. That in this, as in much else, the Gnostics agreed with the apostle Paul did not help them, for Paul himself was made acceptable to the mass of Christians only by bring reinterpreted on a large scale. The following passage from Irenæus's great work, Against Heresies, illustrates the way Paul was reinterpreted to conform to the orthodox belief of the second century: "If therefore it is flesh and blood that give us life it has not been said of flesh and blood in a literal sense that they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, but the words refer to the above-mentioned carnal deeds which turn man to sin and deprive him of life." [1]

Another tenet of Gnosticism, severely criticised, at any rate, by its theological opponents, was its denial of the reality of Christ's earthly life, a denial motivated by its radical dualism. As a matter of fact, the connection between the saviour of the various Gnostic systems and the historic figure Jesus, was at best loose and tenuous. The divine Saviour Christ who had come down from above was alone important to them. How much their docetism really counted in the popular indictment of the Gnostics it is difficult to say. Converts to Christianity from the Gentile world knew Christ first as the Lord of the cult, not as the man Jesus, and his human life always made difficulties for them. Indeed, while the radical docetism of the Gnos-

[1] Irenæus, Against Heresies, V, 14:4.

tic schools was condemned by the church at large, docetism has always been current in a more or less subtle form, and the real manhood of Jesus has seldom found full recognition. In these circumstances it can hardly be supposed that the recognition of Christ as a spiritual being only can have seemed to most Christians a serious offense. On the contrary, they were probably instinctively sympathetic with it, for it must have seemed more in accord with their belief in him as a god. But to theologians interested in establishing the connection between Christ and the world creator and concerned also to insure the salvation of the flesh, docetism seemed a fatal error and was treated as such. The words of Ignatius in his Epistle to the Smyrnæans are particularly enlightening: "He suffered all these things for our sakes; and he suffered truly as he also raised himself truly; not as certain unbelievers say that he suffered in semblance being himself mere semblance. And according as their opinions are so shall it happen to them, for they shall be without body and demonlike" (chap. 2).

The truth is, the count against the Gnostics was very serious, and after some years of controversy Gnosticism was condemned as a denial of the Christian faith, and the belief that the God of the Jews is the God of the Christians, and that Jesus Christ is his Son, became alone orthodox. To this result there contributed also

the personal attitude of the Gnostics, for they made themselves unpopular by claiming that they alone were spiritually endowed and capable of salvation, and by speaking contemptuously of all other Christians as animal and fleshly.

The Gnostic controversy, which resulted in the condemnation of the Gnostics and their exclusion from the church, was a theological controversy pure and simple and was carried on by theologians. The Gnostics, as well as their opponents, believed in Christ and in salvation through him—no one, indeed, believed it more profoundly than they—but they differed in their theologies. The Christianity that emerged from the conflict and was handed down as the orthodox faith was not a mere gospel of salvation. It is worthy of notice, indeed, that the old Roman symbol, the original of our Apostles' Creed, does not even mention salvation. The Christianity that emerged from the conflict was not a mere gospel of salvation, but a theology and a cosmology, a doctrine of God and a philosophy of the universe.

A third method of bringing Christianity into a larger setting was followed by the Modalists, of whom I have already spoken more than once. Instead of making Christ the Son of God or identifying him with one of the æons of the Gnostic system, they saw in him the Father himself. He is the creator and ruler of the world

in his own right, and hence Christianity acquires universal significance in the most direct fashion. To what extent the theological interest of bringing Christianity into a larger setting may have influenced the Modalists it is difficult to say. It looks as if they identified Christ with the Father, not because they felt the need of giving him universal significance, but rather because they resented the indignity done him by those who would subject him to another God. At the same time, whatever the motive, the result was a third form of theology, bringing Christianity into a larger setting and giving it other than merely soteriological significance.

But Modalism, like Gnosticism, was rejected by the leading theologians of the third century, Tertullian and Hippolytus in the West and Origen in the East, and came to be universally recognized as a heresy. There was nothing in it to outrage traditional Christian piety, as was the case with Gnosticism, but its unphilosophical character was very offensive to the theologians of the age, and it fell before the growing philosophy of the day—the later Platonic philosophy which was dualistic in its tendency and separated God and man by an impassable chasm. This philosophy found its most consistent Christian expression in Gnosticism. But, as already seen, Gnosticism sacrificed too many values dear to theologians, as well as common people, and it was therefore condemned, and a

moderate form of Platonism, so interpreted as to make room for the Hebrew tradition, won the day against Gnosticism on the one side and Modalism on the other.

As I have already said, the Christianity that emerged from the Gnostic controversy, and the same is true of the controversy with the Modalists, was not a mere gospel of salvation but a theology and a cosmology, a doctrine of God and a philosophy of the universe. To this doctrine of God we must now turn.

It is to be noticed, first of all, that it was not a new doctrine constructed in opposition to heresy; it was the historic Jewish doctrine. The God with whom the anti-Gnostic theologians were connecting Christianity was the God of the Jews. The controversy between them and the Gnostics was not a controversy between monotheism and dualism in general (had it been, the result might have been very different) but between Judaism and Gnosticism. In winning the battle over their opponents, the orthodox theologians won the battle for the God of the Old Testament, the God worshipped by Jesus and the primitive Jewish Christians.

And yet there were important differences between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the Christian theologians. For one thing, the former was the object of religious adoration and devotion; the latter, in the main, a philo-

sophical abstraction. He wore many of the same lineaments, but he occupied a very different place in the life and thought of his worshippers. Already in the previous lecture I have called attention to the contrast in this matter between the Old Testament and the writings of the early fathers. The rarity of the note of deep and fervent piety in the latter was due, in part at least, to the predominantly philosophical character of the God of the theologians.

Justin Martyr's concise definition of God, in the third chapter of his Dialogue with Trypho, throws a flood of light upon the situation. "That which is always the same and in the same way, and is the cause of all other things—that indeed is God." There is no hint in this definition that God has any religious value whatever, or that he meets any of the religious needs of men; and though the definition belongs to the period before Justin's conversion, it is evident that as a Christian he still approves it. With it may be compared the following definition from Tertullian: "The great supreme, established in eternity, unbegotten, unmade, without beginning, without end," [1] and the following statement of Hippolytus: 'There is one God in whom we must believe; without beginning, impassible, immortal, doing all things as he wills, in the way he wills, and when he wills." [2]

[1] Tertullian, Against Marcion, I, 3.
[2] Hippolytus, Against Noetus, chap. 8.

Central in the theologians' doctrine of God, as in that of the Jews, was the fact that God is one. The writings of the theologians are full of monotheism. Often, indeed, Christianity appears in their opinion to consist of little else than a belief that God is one. Thus, in the so-called Hortatory Address to the Greeks (Cohortatio ad Græcos), an apologetic work wrongly ascribed to Justin Martyr, the author says at the beginning that he intends to write about the true religion, and then devotes the whole of his work, except the concluding chapter, in which the advent of Christ is casually mentioned, to the subject of monotheism.[1]

The interest of the theologians in the oneness of God was not the ethical interest of the Old Testament prophets, or even of the Greek dramatists, that the world should be under the control of one moral will. Rather their interest was ontological and cosmological. A quotation or two will illustrate the general situation: "Is it not irrational to call us atheists who distinguish God from matter and own that matter is one thing and God another, and that they are separated by a wide interval? For the Deity is uncreated and eternal and can be apprehended by the mind and reason alone, while matter is created and corruptible." [2]

[1] Cf. also the first book of Theophilus's apologetic work addressed to Autolycus.

[2] Athenagoras, Apology, chap. 4.

Even in the Shepherd of Hermas, which is practical through and through, the doctrine that God is one appears as a cosmological, not an ethical, doctrine, and that though the author gives it a practical application. Thus he says: "First of all believe that God is one, who made all things and perfected them and made all things to be out of that which was not; and contains all things and is himself alone uncontained. Believe then in him and fear him and in this fear be continent."[1] With this may be compared the following passage from the Preaching of Peter, a lost document of the early second century: "Know therefore that there is one God who made the beginning of all things and has authority over the end; the invisible who sees all things, the uncontained who contains all things, who needs nothing but whom all things need, and on whose account they are; incomprehensible, eternal, incorruptible, unmade, who made all things by the word of his power, that is the Son."[2]

Similarly the arguments used in support of belief in God are exclusively cosmological. "I, O King, in the providence of God came into the world; and when I had contemplated the

[1] Hermas, Mandate 1.

[2] In Clement of Alexandria's Stromata, VI, chap. V, 39: 2–3. For many parallels to this and the following passages in Greek philosophy, particularly Stoicism (that God is uncontained but contains all things, that he is in need of nothing, that he is incomprehensible, incorruptible, without beginning and the like), see Geffcken, Zwei griechische Apologeten, pp. 33 ff.

heaven and the earth and the sea, the sun and the moon and the rest, I marvelled at their orderly arrangement. And when I saw that the universe and all that is therein is moved by necessity, I perceived that the mover and controller is God. For everything that causes motion is stronger than that which is moved, and that which controls is stronger than that which is controlled. I say therefore that he who established and controls all things is God, without beginning and without end, immortal and in need of nothing, above all passions and infirmities, above anger and forgetfulness and ignorance and the rest."[1] The contrast between this and the anthropomorphism of the Old Testament is very striking. In the Old Testament we have the concrete and vivid language of religion; in Aristides only the pale abstractions of philosophy.

The following passage, though much more picturesque, is equally removed from the realm of personal religion. "For as the soul in man is not seen, being invisible to men, but is perceived by the movement of the body, so God also cannot be seen by human eyes, but is beheld and known by his providence and works. For in like manner as any one when he sees a ship on the sea full-rigged and under sail and making for the harbor, will certainly infer that there is a pilot on board who is steering her, so it is necessary

[1] Aristides, Apology, chap. 1.

to conclude that God is the pilot of the universe, though he be not visible to the eyes of the flesh, since he is not enclosed in space. For if a man cannot look upon the sun, though it be a very small heavenly body, on account of its exceeding heat and power, how shall a mortal man be able to face the glory of God which is unutterable? For as the pomegranate with the rind containing it has within it many cells and compartments which are separated by membranes, and many seeds dwelling in it, so the whole creation is contained by the spirit of God, and the containing spirit together with the creation is contained by the hand of God. As therefore the seed of the pomegranate dwelling inside cannot see what is outside the rind, itself being within, so neither can man, who together with the whole creation is contained by the hand of God, behold God. Moreover an earthly king is believed to exist even though he be not seen by all, for he is known by his laws and ordinances and authorities and armies and statues. Are you unwilling then that God should be known by his works and mighty deeds?" [1]

The arguments urged by the theologians for one God as distinguished from many gods are likewise exclusively philosophical,[2] except where testimonies are drawn from ancient literature,

[1] Theophilus, To Autolycus, I, 5.

[2] And for the most part quite unoriginal, as is true also of their arguments for the divine existence already quoted. See Geffcken, op. cit., passim.

Jewish and heathen, as, for instance, in the Hortatory Address to the Greeks ascribed to Justin Martyr, in the tract on the sole government of God likewise ascribed to him, and in the Apology of Athenagoras; and even there the conception of God is philosophical rather than religious. Origen of Alexandria, writing about the middle of the third century, says: "How much more effective it is and more fitting than all these inventions (i. e., the pagan deities) that being persuaded by what we see in the admirable order of the world we worship the one maker of it; for it is one and wholly in harmony with itself and therefore cannot be the work of many makers." [1]

Similarly Lactantius of North Africa, writing half a century later, says: "If there were in one army as many generals as legions and cohorts and regiments and battalions, it would be impossible to draw the army up in battle array, for each would decline the peril. Nor could the army easily be governed and controlled, because all would use their own private counsels by the diversity of which they would do more harm than good. So in the government of the world everything will be dissolved and fall to pieces unless there be one to whom the care of the whole world is referred." [2]

Lactantius also maintains that if there were many gods they would all be less than perfect,

[1] Origen, Against Celsus, I, 23.
[2] Lactantius, Divine Institutes, I, 3.

for each would lack something the other possessed, and the more the weaker. "The virtues and powers of the gods must necessarily be weaker, because so much will be wanting to each as is in the others. Thus the more there are the less powerful each will be." [1]

Again he argues for monotheism from the eternity and incorruptibility of the divine nature. If divisible it would be destructible and hence not eternal: "Whatever is capable of being divided is necessarily destructible. But if destruction is far removed from God because he is incorruptible and eternal, it follows that the divine power cannot be divided." [2]

An interesting argument for monotheism, based upon the notion that an infinite being must fill all space and leave no room for other gods is found in Athenagoras: "If from the beginning there were two or more gods, either they were in one and the same place or each in his own place. In one and the same place they could not be. . . . But if each was in his own place, since he who made the world is above created things and around the things which he made and set in order, where can the other or the rest be? For if the world having been made spherical is enclosed within the circle of the heavens and the maker of the world is above created things gov-

[1] Ibid.

[2] Op. cit., I, 3. Cf. Athenagoras, Apology, chap. 8, and Origen, De principiis, I, 1–6. For parallels in Philo to this anti-Stoic doctrine, see Geffcken, op. cit., p. 178.

erning the world by his providence, what place is there for the other god or for the rest of the gods? For he is neither in the world, for it belongs to another; nor around the world, for God the maker of the world is above it. But if he is neither in the world nor around the world, for all that surrounds it is occupied by this one, where is he?" [1]

All this is exclusively philosophical. Nowhere in the early fathers, indeed, are there any religious or ethical or what may be called practical reasons for monotheism as distinguished from polytheism. Quite evidently monotheism, so far as it was not a mere matter of Jewish tradition,[2] was the affair of the theologian, not of the common man.

It was monotheism sometimes that led to an assertion that occurs frequently in the writings of the fathers that God has no name as men have. A name is to distinguish one person or thing from another, and in polytheism the gods, of course, have different names; but as there is in reality only one God, no proper name is needed in speaking of him. Thus it is said in the Octavius of Minucius Felix, written toward the end of the second century: "Neither must you seek a name for God. God is his name. There is need of designations when a multitude is to be

[1] Athenagoras, Apology, chap. 8. Cf. Tertullian, Against Marcion, I, 11.

[2] As, e. g., to 1 Clement.

divided into individuals by the special characteristics of names: for God who is alone, the name God is the whole" (chap. 18). Also in the Hortatory Address to the Greeks, ascribed to Justin: "God cannot be called by any proper name, for names are given to designate and distinguish matters which are many and various. But no one existed before God who could give him a name, nor did he himself think it necessary to name himself, since he is one and unique."[1] It was probably the same notion that led the martyr Attalus, when suffering in the persecution in Gaul in the middle of the second century, to reply to the question "What is God's name?" "God has not a name as a man has."[2] Even though Attalus was a martyr, this is the language of philosophy, not of religion. The Jews, too, were monotheists, but their God had his own name, Jahveh.[3]

It is worth remarking in this connection that the abstract philosophical conception of God was shared in the second and following centuries even by Christians of the rank and file. Hermas, as we have seen, used philosophical language in speaking of God, though he was quite without philosophical interest or education, and the

[1] Cohortatio ad Gentiles, chap. 21. Cf. Justin, Apology, I, 10, and Cyprian, Vanity of Idols, 9.

[2] Eusebius, Church History, V, 1: 52.

[3] That the supreme God has no name was frequently said by contemporary Greek and Roman writers, as well as by the Jewish philosopher, Philo. See Geffcken, op. cit., p. 38.

same is true of the Clementine literature. In general, it is perhaps fair to say that so far as the Christians had another God than Jesus Christ he was as a rule a philosophical abstraction rather than the living God of the Jews and of Jesus.

There were important differences, I said a few moments ago, between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the Christian theologians. Among these differences the most significant of all was that the Christian God did not stand alone, the one Lord of all the earth, besides whom there were no other gods, but was associated with another divine being, the Lord Jesus Christ. Speaking of the Jews the apologist Aristides says: "For to this day they worship the one God almighty, but not according to knowledge. For they deny that Christ is the Son of God, and they are much like the heathen, even though they may seem to make some approach to the truth from which they have removed themselves." [1] In spite of their monotheism they are said to be "much like the heathen" because they deny that Christ is the Son of God; that is, the main thing is not monotheism but Christian monotheism—one God whose son is Jesus Christ. Aristides continues: "Now the Christians trace their origin from the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is acknowledged by the Holy Spirit to be the Son of the most high

[1] Aristides, Apology, chap. 14.

God who came down from heaven for the salvation of men. For they (i. e., the Christians) know God the creator and fashioner of all things by the only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit; and besides him they worship no other God" (15).

Similarly Justin Martyr says in his second Apology: "Whatever things have been rightly said by all belong to us Christians. For after God we worship and love the Logos, who is from the unbegotten and ineffable God, for he became man on our account." [1]

This is enough to show that the Christian theologians were not interested in monotheism because Judaism, the parent faith of Christianity, was monotheistic. Their monotheism was of another sort altogether. It was of a sort that found no difficulty in admitting two or three objects of worship (Father, Son, and Spirit), or even many others, as is shown by Justin Martyr when he says: "Hence also we are called atheists. And we confess that we are atheists so far as gods of this sort are concerned, but not with respect to the most true God, the Father of righteousness and temperance and the other virtues, who is free from wickedness. But we venerate and worship him, and the Son who came from him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels who follow and are made like him, and the prophetic Spirit." [2]

[1] Justin Martyr, Apology, II, 13; cf. also Apology, I, 46.

[2] Justin Martyr, Apology, I, 6. The translation of this passage in the Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. I, p. 164, is due to dogmatic considerations and is quite unwarranted.

With this may be compared the words of Athenagoras: "Who then would not be puzzled at hearing those called atheists who acknowledge God Father and God Son and Holy Spirit, and who set forth their power in unity and their distinction in rank? Nor does the theological part of our teaching stop with these; but we also recognize a multitude of angels and ministers whom God the maker and creator of the world through his Logos distributed and appointed to have to do with the elements and the heavens and the world and the things in it and their ordering." [1]

The truth is, it was not monotheism as distinguished from polytheism—one God as distinguished from many—that the Christian theologians were interested in, but a theism that guaranteed Christianity and gave it universal authority and value. Such a theism was not in any way interfered with—on the contrary, it was established—by the recognition of Christ as the Son of God, a divine being, one with and second only to the supreme God himself. Such a theism indeed was not interfered with by adding any number of objects of worship to the supreme God himself, provided only they were one with and loyally subject to him. This explains why the worship of the saints commonly seemed entirely consonant with Christian monotheism.

The recognition both of the God of the Jews and of the divine Lord Jesus Christ made a problem for the Christian theologians which the

[1] Athenagoras, Apology, chap. 10; cf. also chap. 24.

Jews were not troubled with. How were the two divine beings related? As has already been said, the relationship was usually expressed by calling Christ the Son of God, but there was considerable difference of opinion as to just what his sonship involved. In elucidating the relationship Justin Martyr made use of the Logos conception which was current in contemporary philosophy. Identifying the Son of God with the divine Logos, as the author of the fourth Gospel had done before him, he was able to reconcile the philosophical doctrine of God as infinite, immovable, impassible, and unapproachable, both with the God of the Old Testament theophanies and with the divine Christ, who appeared on earth for men's salvation.[1]

The idea of the Logos was taken over by the other apologists and soon became generally recognized as an essential part of Christian theology.[2] The twofold meaning of the term—reason and word, the indwelling and the outgoing logos[3]—peculiarly fitted it to mediate between the God of philosophy and the God of religion, between God in himself and God in his relation to

[1] Cf. Apology, I, 5, 32, 33, 46; II, 8, 10, 13; Dialogue with Trypho, 61, 128.

[2] Cf., for instance, among many other passages, Tatian, 5; Athenagoras, 6, 10; Theophilus, II, 10, 22; Irenæus, Against Heresies, I, 9:3; IV, 24:1; V, 1:1; Apostolic Preaching, 5; Clement of Alexandria, Pædagogus, III, 12; Stromata, V, chap. III, 16; Origen, Against Celsus, II, 9; V, 24; VI, 17; Tertullian, Apology, 21; Against Praxeas, 5.

[3] Cf. Irenæus, Against Heresies, II, 28:4.

the world and to men. The distinction between these two—the God of philosophy and the God of religion—is nowhere more explicitly avowed than in the following passage from Tertullian's work, Against Marcion: "Whatever you demand therefore as worthy of God must be found in the Father who is invisible and unapproachable and calm, and so to speak the God of the philosophers. But whatever you consider as unworthy must be counted as belonging to the Son who has been seen and heard and met with, the witness and servant of the Father, uniting in himself man and God; in mighty deeds God, in weak deeds man, that he may confer upon man as much as he takes from God." [1]

In view of such a quotation it would seem that the real God of the theologians as well as of the common people was Jesus Christ. So far as they had a god over and above him, he was a philosophical being required only by speculative considerations. The need of bringing Christianity into a universal setting led the theologians of the second century to associate Christ with the God of all the earth; but except for the exigencies of philosophy he might himself have been recognized as the God of all the earth and no other God have been required.

The philosophical character of the theologians' doctrine of God appears very clearly in

[1] Tertullian, Against Marcion, II, 27.

their treatment of the spirituality of God. It was taken for granted by the fathers, in agreement with John 5 : 24, that God is spirit, invisible and intangible. As Tatian puts it: "God is spirit, not pervading matter but the maker of material spirits and of the forms which are in matter. He is both invisible and impalpable, being himself Father of sensible and invisible things."[1] Much was made of this in the polemic against the worship of idols. God is not of such a nature that he can be represented in wood and stone.[2]

Conceptions of the nature of spirit varied considerably, ranging all the way from the Stoic notion of a finer kind of matter, invisible but permeating space, much as gas or air does, to the Platonic notion of an entirely different type of existence: non-spatial, unextended, simple, indivisible, active, and conscious, as distinguished from matter which is extended, spatial, compounded, divisible, passive, and unconscious.

Among the fathers Tertullian stood at one extreme and Clement and Origen at the other. Tertullian even asserted the corporeality of God as he did of the human soul. "Who will deny that God is a body although God is spirit? For a spirit is a body of its own kind in its own

[1] Tatian, Apology, chap. 4.

[2] In their polemic against the worship of idols, the Christian apologists were anticipated both by Jews and Greeks. See Geffcken, op. cit., pp. xx ff.

form." [1] Tertullian did this because in his opinion only the corporeal could be regarded as real and because, unless corporeal, God could not have created corporeal things. "Everything that exists is a body after its own kind. Nothing is incorporeal except what does not exist." [2] "How could it be that he himself is nothing without whom nothing was made, that he who made solid things is void and he who made full things is empty, and he who made corporeal things is incorporeal?" [3]

Tertullian was apparently not alone among the Christians in this view, if we may judge from the words of Origen: "It must also be investigated how God ought to be understood, whether as corporeal and formed according to some shape, or of a different nature from bodies —a matter which is not clearly indicated in our preaching." [4] But Tertullian's position seems to have been exceptional, at any rate among theologians. At least it was shared by no other father known to us except Melito, who wrote a work, now lost, on the corporeality of God.[5]

Some of the fathers, while denying the cor-

[1] Against Praxeas, 7. [2] On the Flesh of Christ, 11.
[3] Against Praxeas, 7.
[4] De principiis, preface, 9. In his work, Against Celsus (VII, 27), Origen records that Celsus accused the Christians of believing that God was corporeal and had a body like a man. Origen denies that this is the Christian opinion, and says that if Celsus had actually heard it expressed it must have been by "certain simple and guileless persons who were ignorant of the meaning of Scripture."
[5] See Eusebius's Church History, IV, 26, and the note in my edition.

poreality of God, brought him under the category of space. Thus Athenagoras, though he distinguished God from matter and made him impassible and indivisible, yet represented him as filling space so that there was no room for other gods.[1]

Similarly Theophilus, while emphasizing God's spirituality and drawing a sharp contrast between God and things, yet spoke of his "containing spirit," and said "God is not contained but is himself the place (τόπος) of all things," that is, he is himself space.[2]

Others recognized that the denial of corporeality to God meant that he is non-spatial as well as immaterial in other ways. Thus Clement of Alexandria declared that God is above both space and time. "Wherefore Moses, persuaded that God could never be known by human wisdom, said, 'Show me thyself,' and strove to enter into the darkness where God's voice was, that is, into the impenetrable and obscure notions concerning being. For God is not in darkness or space, but above space and time and the peculiarity of created things. Wherefore he never dwells in a part, either containing or contained, or by any limitation or boundary." [3]

[1] See the passage quoted on p. 116; and see, also, Novatian, On the Trinity, chap. 2.

[2] Theophilus, To Autolycus, I, 5 and II, 3; cf. also Arnobius, Against the Heathen, I, 31. For parallels in Philo, see Geffcken, op. cit., p. 250.

[3] Clement, Stromata, II, chap. II, 6: 1.

The fullest discussion of God's spirituality in early patristic literature is found at the beginning of Origen's De principiis, where he tries in all sorts of ways to show the contrast between the spiritual and the corporeal. "God therefore must not be thought of either as any kind of a body or as being in a body, but as a simple, intellectual nature, admitting no sort of addition; that it may not be believed that he has anything greater or less within him but is wholly one (μόνας) and so to speak a unit (ἕνας), both the mind and the source from which all intellectual nature or mind takes its beginning. But mind, indeed, that it may move or act needs no corporeal space or sensible size or bodily form or color or any other of those things which are the properties of body or matter. Wherefore that nature which is simply and wholly mind is able to move or effect anything without delay or tarrying." [1] To this may be added the following passage from Origen's work, Against Celsus: "Not understanding the things concerning the Spirit of God (for 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned') Celsus frames a theory for himself, supposing that when we say God is spirit we differ in no way from the Stoics among the Greeks who declare that God is spirit, diffused through all things and con-

[1] Origen, De principiis, I, 1:6.

taining all things in himself. For the oversight and providence of God do pervade all things, but not like the spirit of the Stoics. And providence contains and embraces all things that are foreseen, but not as a containing body contains things when that which is contained is also body, but as a divine power embraces the things contained." [1]

The spirituality of God naturally suggests the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit, the third person in the historic doctrine of the Trinity. What is the relation of the idea that God is spirit to the idea that there is a Spirit of God? The conception of the Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit, was a heritage from Judaism. Jesus had almost nothing to say about the Spirit, but among the early Christians the spiritual phenomena—ecstasy, prophecy, speaking with tongues and the like—which marked the life of the primitive communities, were commonly traced to the Spirit, and belief in the Spirit thus became the expression of a very real and vivid religious experience. In the epistles of Paul, the Spirit is referred to over and over again. Sometimes it is distinguished from God and Christ, again it is spoken of as if it were the common divine nature in which both God and Christ share, in which indeed Christians too share. This Pauline notion is found occasionally in the Christian literature

[1] Against Celsus, VI, 71; cf. also Origen, On Prayer, chap. 23.

of the first and second centuries, but as a rule the Spirit appears as a distinct being and is associated, as a third, with God and Christ, or the Father and the Son.

Ordinarily there is no intimation as to the relationship of the Spirit to God or Christ. Frequently it is called the Spirit of God, occasionally the Spirit of Christ, more often the Holy Spirit, or simply the Spirit. In at least one passage Paul identifies the Spirit with the Lord, that is the risen Christ,[1] and in Second Clement it is said, "If we say that the flesh is the church, and the Spirit is Christ, then he who has maltreated the flesh has maltreated the church. Such a one therefore shall not partake of the Spirit, which is Christ."[2] In the Gospel of Matthew, the Spirit is represented as the father of Christ, in the apocryphal Gospel according to the Hebrews as his mother. In Hermas the Spirit is called the Son of God, and it is said, "The Holy pre-existent Spirit, which created the whole creation, God made to dwell in flesh that he wished."[3] In other words the Spirit is given the place usually assigned to the Logos. Similarly in Justin Martyr, the Spirit and the Logos or Son of God are explicitly identified and the inspiration of the prophets is ascribed now to the Logos and now to the Spirit.[4]

[1] 2 Cor. 3 : 17; cf. 1 Cor. 15 : 45.
[2] 2 Clement 14 : 4.
[3] Hermas, Sim., V, 6 : 5; cf. Sim., IX, 1 : 1.
[4] Justin, Apology, I, 33, 36, 38, 39.

Evidently Justin had no independent place for the latter. At the same time, under the influence of Christian tradition, which spoke of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit, he found it necessary to distinguish between Christ and the Holy Spirit, and as the former was the Son of God and the incarnate Logos, he was compelled to distinguish between the Spirit and the Logos, though what the distinction was he could not say. A similar confusion appears in Theophilus,[1] but in Athenagoras, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and the other fathers of the third and following centuries, the ambiguity disappears and the Spirit is regularly associated as a third with the Father and the Son. This came to be the settled conviction of the church, which finally agreed in the belief that the Father, Son, and Spirit share equally in the one divine nature, or are all equally manifestations of God.

The discussions of the first three centuries had to do only with the relation of Christ to God, or of the Son to the Father, and were not concerned with the Spirit, which was ultimately recognized as the third person in the Godhead, not because of any special interest in the subject, or the feeling that such a person was needed in addition to the Logos, but because of the baptismal formula in which the Spirit

[1] Theophilus, To Autolycus, II, 10. In II, 15 Theophilus speaks of the Trinity as consisting of God, the Logos, and Wisdom.

found a place at an early day, and whence it made its way into the old Roman symbol and other early creeds.[1] The disparate notions of God as Spirit and of the Spirit as the third person in the Godhead bred confusion in the early church, a confusion which has continued ever since. The one represents a theistic interest, the interest of the theologians, the other an effort to give expression to a fact of religious experience, the experience of the Christian community. The two notions are quite incommensurate and have no real connection.

Returning from this digression to the subject of the spirituality of God, of which I was speaking, I may remark that in spite of the wide variety of opinion touching the nature of the spiritual, it was agreed by all Christians that God is spirit and hence is not to be apprehended by the bodily senses. But this led to the question, how can God be known? Some of the early fathers claimed that the knowledge of God is innate and therefore universal. This was Cicero's contention, and his influence was widely felt among the Latin fathers. According to Tertullian: "From the beginning the consciousness of God is an endowment of the soul; neither is it different among Egyptians or Syrians or the people of Pontus."[2] And Arnobius says: "It is as dangerous to attempt to prove by argu-

[1] See my Apostles' Creed, pp. 145 ff.
[2] Against Marcion, I, 10.

ments that God is supreme as by reasoning of this sort to wish to discover that he exists. It matters not at all whether you deny him or assert and confess that he exists, since both the assertion of such a thing and the denial of an unbelieving opponent are equally culpable. Is there any human being who has not entered on the first day of his life with the notion of that supreme being? In whom is it not implanted at birth, on whom is it not stamped, yes impressed almost in his mother's womb, in whom is it not innate that there is a King and Lord, the governor of all existing things? Finally, if dumb animals were able to speak, if they could use our language, yes if trees, clods, rocks, endowed with living sense, were able to produce vocal sounds and utter articulate words, would they not with nature as their guide and master, in the faith of uncorrupted simplicity, know that there is a God and proclaim him to be the only Lord of all?"[1]

Others claimed that man possesses a spiritual faculty by which God is perceived as directly as things are perceived by the bodily senses. Thus Theophilus says: "For as those who see with the eyes of the body perceive the earthly affairs of life and at the same time discriminate the things that differ, whether light or darkness, white or black, unsightly or beautiful, graceful and symmetrical or awkward and ill-propor-

[1] Arnobius, Against the Heathen, I, 32–33.

tioned or monstrous or mutilated, and in like manner the sounds that are heard, whether sharp or deep or sweet, thus it is also that we are able to perceive God with the ears of the heart and the eyes of the soul." [1] With this may be compared the words of Origen: "For he (i. e., Solomon) knew that there are two kinds of senses in us, the one kind mortal, corruptible, human, the other immortal and intellectual, which he called divine. Therefore by this divine sense, not of the eyes but of a pure heart, which is the mind, God can be seen by those who are worthy." [2]

Still others claimed that we cannot see God directly but can only apprehend him through his works.[3] "For the God whom we worship we neither show nor see. On this account we believe him to be God because we are able to perceive him, though we cannot see him. For in his works and in all the movements of the world we behold his power when it thunders and lightens, and when it clears up. Nor should you wonder that you do not see God. By the wind and the tempest all things are driven about and shaken and agitated, yet we do not see the wind or the tempest. So we are not able to look at the sun, which is for all creatures the cause of seeing; the pupil of the eye is withdrawn from its rays,

[1] Theophilus, To Autolycus, I, 2.
[2] Origen, De principiis, I, 1:9.
[3] This is genuinely Stoic. See Geffcken, op. cit., p. 35.

the gaze of the beholder is dimmed, and if you look too long all sight is extinguished. What! are you able to endure the maker of the sun himself, that fountain of light, when you turn away from his lightnings, when you hide yourself from his thunderbolts?" [1] With this may be compared the passage from Theophilus quoted above, and also the words of Origen: "Our mind therefore, being unable to see God himself as he is, knows the parent of the universe from the beauty of his works and the comeliness of his creatures." [2]

These words of Origen are in the same chapter as the passage concerning a divine sense, which was quoted a moment ago, and, like the words of Theophilus, make it clear that we must not press the phrases "divine sense" and "eyes of the soul" too far. The phrases may mean special organs by which God is directly perceived, or they may mean simply such a cast of mind, or such a religious and moral character, as leads a person to assume God upon the basis of phenomena which to another man may suggest no such conclusion. This is very commonly expressed to-day by the phrase "spiritually minded." To read into the words "eyes of the soul" or "divine sense" more than this is to give them a mystical meaning which hardly accords with what we know, at any rate, of Theophilus and

[1] Minucius Felix, Octavius, chap. 32.
[2] De principiis, I, 1:6.

Origen, who were far from being mystics in the ordinary sense of the word.

However much they might emphasize man's natural apprehension of God or the possibility of knowing him from his works, most of the fathers insisted on revelation as alone providing an adequate knowledge of him. Sometimes, indeed, they assert that without revelation it is impossible to know him at all. Thus Irenæus says: "The Lord taught us that no one is able to know God unless taught by God, that is, without God, God cannot be known; but that it is the will of the Father that God should be known. For they shall know him to whom the Son shall reveal him." [1] And yet elsewhere Irenæus says: "Wherefore, although no one knows the Father except the Son nor the Son except the Father, and those to whom the Son shall reveal him, nevertheless all know this—since reason implanted in their minds moves them and reveals it to them—that there is one God, the Lord of all." [2] Similarly Clement of Alexandria frequently speaks of the necessity of

[1] Irenæus, Against Heresies, IV, 6:4; cf. also ibid., V, 1:1, and Tertullian, De anima, 1. According to Irenæus, revelation is not confined to the historic revelation recorded in the Gospels, for "the Son being present with his handiwork from the beginning reveals the Father to all whom he wills and when he wills and as the Father wills" (IV, 6:7; cf. what Justin Martyr says about the Logos as revealer in Apology, II, 10, 13). Irenæus's attitude is all the more significant because he was arguing with the Gnostics and might naturally have been expected to confine the revelation to the Old and New Testaments.

[2] Irenæus, Against Heresies, II, 6:1.

revelation, as if without it God could not possibly be known, and yet he also speaks of a dim knowledge of God among the heathen,[1] and declares that there was always a natural manifestation of the one almighty God among all right-thinking men;[2] while Origen says that some knowledge of the Father may be gained from his works and from men's natural feelings, but that the Son and the Spirit can be known only by revelation.[3]

The necessity of revelation was sometimes thought to be due to the fact that man's natural knowledge, whether inborn or acquired, was darkened and obscured by sin. "All have eyes, but in some they are diseased and cannot see the light of the sun. Yet it does not follow because the blind do not see that the light of the sun does not shine; but let the blind blame themselves and their own eyes. So also thou, O man, hast the eyes of thy soul diseased by thy sins and evil deeds. Man ought to have his soul pure like a polished mirror. When there is rust on the mirror the face of the man cannot be seen in it. So also when there is sin in the man he cannot see God"[4]—an interesting

[1] Clement, Stromata, VI, chap. VIII, 64: 6.
[2] Ibid., V, chap. XIII, 87: 2.
[3] De principiis, I, 2: 1; cf. also Origen, Against Celsus, VI, 17; On Prayer, I.
[4] Theophilus, To Autolycus, I, 2; cf. Clement of Alexandria (Stromata, IV, chap. VI, 39), who quotes Matt. 5: 8; and also the passage from Origen, De principiis, I, 1: 9, quoted on p. 133 above.

example this of the time-honored habit of ascribing wrong beliefs or lack of religious faith to sin.

Whatever their differences of opinion as to how men know God, there was wide agreement among the fathers that our knowledge of God is at best very limited and that he far transcends our apprehension of him. According to Lactantius, God is adequately known only to himself,[1] and according to Origen, "It is necessary to believe that he is by many degrees far better than we have perceived him to be."[2] The following eloquent passage from Novatian's work on the Trinity, written about the middle of the third century, is worth quoting in this connection. "Concerning him and concerning those things which are his and are in him, neither can the mind of man worthily conceive what they are, how great they are, and of what sort they are; nor is the loftiest human eloquence competent to discourse fittingly of his majesty. For to conceive and to speak of his majesty all eloquence is deservedly mute, every mind is insufficient. For he is greater than mind itself, nor is it possible to conceive how great he is, since if he could be conceived he would be less than the human mind which could conceive him. He is also greater than all speech, nor can he be declared; for if he could be declared he would be

[1] Lactantius, Divine Institutes, I, 8.
[2] De principiis, I, 1:5; cf. also Against Celsus, VI, 62, 65.

less than human speech, by which when he is declared he can be both encompassed and contained. For whatever may be thought concerning him will be less than he; and whatever may be said will be less than he. For we are able in some measure to perceive him in silence, but we are not able in words to declare him as he is. For were you to call him Light you would name a creature of his rather than himself; you would not express him. Were you to call him Power, you would speak of his power and set it forth rather than himself. Were you to call him Majesty you would describe his honor rather than himself. And why do I spend a long time going over the details one by one? I will at once unfold the whole matter. Whatever you may allege concerning him you set forth some deed or power of his rather than himself. For what could you worthily either say or think of him who is greater than all words or thoughts? . . . For if our eyes are dazzled when we look at the sun so that, overcome by the brightness of its rays, we cannot gaze upon the orb itself, our mental vision suffers in the same way in all our thought of God, and by how much the more intent we are in contemplating God by so much the more we are blinded by the light of our own thought. For what—that I may say it again—can you worthily say of him who is more sublime than all sublimity, higher than all height, deeper than all depth, more luminous than all light, clearer

than all clarity, more splendid than all splendor, stronger than all strength, more powerful than all power, more beautiful than all beauty, truer than all truth, braver than all fortitude, greater than all majesty, mightier than all might, richer than all riches, wiser than all wisdom, more benign than all benignity, better than all goodness, juster than all justice, more merciful than all clemency?" [1]

I spoke above of the monotheistic interest underlying the frequent assertion that God has not a name as men have. This assertion was also due to the notion that God so far transcends our knowledge of him that we cannot properly give him a name, for to name a being is to describe his nature and character. According to Justin Martyr, "No one can give a name to the ineffable God; and if any one dare to say he has a name he raves in hopeless madness." [2] And Clement of Alexandria says: "The One is indivisible, therefore also infinite, not considered with reference to the impossibility of giving an account of it, but with reference to its being without dimensions and having no limit; and hence it is without form and without a name. And if we ever name it, improperly calling it one, or the good, or mind, or absolute being, or father, or God, or creator, or Lord, we do not really give it a name, but being at a loss we use good names that the understanding in

[1] Novatian, De Trinitate, chap. 2. [2] Justin, Apology, I, 61.

order not to err about other things may have these to rest upon. For none of them by itself reveals God but all together show the power of the Almighty." [1] Origen has some discriminating remarks upon this subject: "The statement that God cannot be named needs to be taken with a distinction. For if it means that there are no words or symbols that can express the attributes of God the statement is true, since indeed many qualities cannot be named. For who can describe in words the difference in the sweetness of a date and of a fig? And who can distinguish and mark with a name the peculiar property of each individual thing? It is no wonder, therefore, that God cannot thus be named. But if you take the naming to mean that something about him can be expressed in words in order to lead the hearer by the hand and make him understand so far as is possible to human nature some things concerning God, there is no absurdity in saying that he can be named." [2]

Of all the early fathers Clement of Alexandria went furthest in asserting the incomprehensibility of God. He identified God with the philosophical absolute, a conception reached by a process of abstraction, by denying one after another all the qualities of being. Thus he says: "The sacrifice acceptable to God is unchanging abstraction from the body and its passions.

[1] Clement, Stromata, V, chap. XII, 81 : 6–82 : 2.
[2] Origen, Against Celsus, VI, 65.

This is the really true piety; and therefore was not philosophy rightly called by Socrates the practice of death? For he who does not employ sight in thinking, nor drag in any of the other senses, but with the pure mind itself reaches the objects, he follows the true philosophy. This is what Pythagoras wished with the five years' silence which he recommended to his disciples, that turning away from the senses they should look upon the deity with the mind alone. . . . We may then apprehend the way of purification by confession and that of contemplation by analysis, going forward to the first notion, beginning by analysis with the things that underlie it, removing from the body its physical qualities, taking away the dimension of depth, then that of breadth, and in addition that of length. For the point which is left is a monad, so to speak, having position, from which if we take away position we have a monad in thought. If, therefore, taking away all that pertains to bodies and to the things called incorporeal, we cast ourselves into the immensity of Christ and thence by purity go on into the void, we may come somehow or other to the understanding of the Almighty, knowing not what he is but what he is not. Form and motion, or standing or a throne or a place or right or left are not at all to be attributed to the Father of all even though it is so written. But what each of these means will be shown in the proper place. The first

cause therefore is not in space, but above space and time and name and understanding." [1]

Clement's younger contemporary, the great Neo-Platonist, Plotinus, went even further. According to Plotinus, to reach God it is not enough to rise above the senses into pure thought, but one must abandon thought altogether and give oneself up to ecstasy. Plotinus was sceptical as to the ability of science or philosophy to reach the real values of life, and he ranked pure feeling or ecstasy above, not below, thought and knowledge. He was a thoroughgoing mystic. Neo-Platonism, indeed, was the classic form of Greek mysticism and was responsible for much of the Christian mysticism of the Middle Ages. The Pseudo-Dionysian writings of the fifth century are the best example from the ancient church of genuine Neo-Platonic mysticism in a Christian dress. A quotation or two will serve to illustrate the author's attitude.

"Do thou, dear Timothy, in thy eager striving after mystic visions, abandon both sense-perception and mental activity, all things sensible and intellectual, all not-being and being, and so far as is possible without knowledge mount up into union with that which is above all being and knowledge. For by abstracting thyself completely and absolutely from all things thou shalt be lifted up to the superessential brightness of

[1] Clement, Stromata, V, chap. XI, 67: 1–3; 71: 2–5. All this is very like Philo.

the divine darkness, laying aside all things and being released from them." [1] "We pray to be in this darkness which is above light, and to see by not seeing and not knowing, and to know that which is above sight and knowledge, that which is not to be seen or known." [2] "And if any one who has seen God understands what he has seen, he has not seen him but some one of his creatures which exist and are known. But God himself, raised above mind and being, in that he is wholly unknown and is not, both exists in a superessential manner and is known in a supermental way." [3]

In speaking of Pseudo-Dionysius I have gone far beyond the chronological limits set for this study of the God of the early Christians. To return to Clement of Alexandria—he was a significant figure in the history of Christian thought, not only because he identified God, that is, the God of Hebrew and Christian tradition, whom he worshipped, with the philosophical absolute, but also because he undertook to reconcile the two by the doctrine of the Logos. God in himself, according to Clement, is inaccessible, unapproachable, incommunicable, unknowable, altogether apart and out of relation to the world. In the Logos he comes into relation with space and time, creates, governs, reveals himself to men. Thus God is at once transcendent and im-

[1] Pseudo-Dionysius, On Mystical Theology, chap. 1, § 1.
[2] Ibid., chap. 2.
[3] Pseudo-Dionysius, Epistle 1.

manent, the absolute and yet the personal God of traditional religion. The Logos conception perfectly served Clement's theological needs. But, unfortunately, permanent and irremediable confusion was caused by distinguishing God the Father revealed in the Old Testament from the Son of God incarnate in Christ, and by identifying the Logos with the latter instead of the former. This was made necessary by Christian tradition, but it left the contradiction between God the absolute, on the one hand, and God the creator and ruler of the world and the father of Jews and Christians, on the other hand, quite unresolved. If Christ had been identified with God the Father (as was done by the Modalists), the difficulty would have been removed. As it is, it has wrought permanent confusion in Christian theism.

The development of the Logos Christology and its ultimate incorporation in the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity has been traced over and over again, and I shall not take the time here to recount the familiar story. I may simply reiterate in closing that the Logos Christology was not a religious but a philosophical affair; not an expression of Christian piety, which was satisfied to assert the lordship of Jesus Christ, but a product of Greek philosophy, which was intolerant of the anthropomorphism of the popular religions, whether pagan, Jewish, or Christian.

It would be misleading, however, to leave the

impression that the doctrine of the Trinity of which the Logos conception was an integral part was exclusively philosophical. It was made up of two elements: the Logos Christology—or the pre-existence of the Son of God incarnate in Christ—and the deity of this pre-existent Son, and hence of Christ, who was his incarnation. The latter element represented a religious interest as old as the Apostle Paul—the former the philosophical interest that has been referred to. In John and Ignatius and Irenæus and Athanasius Paul's interest in redemption by the transformation of human nature through union with the divine—the interest of the mystery cults—was controlling. It was this interest that conquered Arianism and made the deity of Christ a fundamental tenet in Nicene and post-Nicene Christianity. But in view of the philosophical situation which has been described, it was impossible for the deity of Christ to maintain itself with the theologians except in the form of the Logos Christology. The latter is wholly philosophical. The doctrine of the Trinity of which it became a component part is at once philosophical and religious.

LECTURE IV

CREATION, PROVIDENCE, AND JUDGMENT

AN essential element in the Jewish doctrine of God was the belief in divine creation, the belief that the God of Israel is the creator of the world and of man. The belief in divine creation is very old. It represents, to be sure, a somewhat advanced stage in the history of religion. Primitive peoples commonly take the world for granted and ask no questions about its origin. But already many centuries before the beginning of the Christian era, speculation upon the subject was common in Egypt, Babylonia, and India, and the agency of God or the gods in the production of the world was widely recognized. Belief in divine creation was common, though by no means universal, among the Greeks and Romans. It was denied by Heraclitus, Democritus, and others among the Greeks and by the Roman Lucretius in his great poem De rerum natura, but it was accepted by Plato and the Stoics, and probably in some form or other it was the belief of multitudes.

The belief in divine creation was firmly established among the Hebrews centuries before Christ, and was taken for granted by him as by

his fellow countrymen in general. There are only two specific references to the subject in the words of Jesus recorded in the Synoptic Gospels ("from the beginning of the creation which God created," Mark 13 : 19, and "He that created from the beginning made them male and female," Matt. 19 : 4), but the assumption underlies many of his utterances.

As was remarked in a previous lecture, the Jewish disciples retained the belief in the God of the Jews which they had before they became Christians. This carried with it the belief in divine creation, and there is no reason to suppose that any of them doubted it. It may be assumed, indeed, that wherever the Jewish God was accepted, whether by Jewish or Gentile Christians, it was taken for granted that the world was created by him. Compare, for instance, the words of Clement of Rome, to whom the belief in the almighty creator was a fundamental tenet of Christianity: "The creator and master of the universe himself rejoiceth in his works. For by his exceeding great might he established the heavens and by his incomprehensible understanding he set them in order. And he separated the earth from the water that surrounded it and fixed it upon the secure foundation of his own will. And the living creatures that walk upon it he commanded to exist by his own decree; the sea and the living creatures in it he made ready and enclosed by his own power.

Above all, man, the most excellent and greatest in understanding, he formed in the likeness of his own image with his sacred and faultless hands." [1]

There is little evidence that the belief in divine creation responded to any particular need, religious or otherwise, on the part of the earliest Christians. The words of 1 Peter, "Let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful creator," perhaps suggest that God is to be trusted because he is the creator, and the author of the long prayer in 1 Clement seems to have found comfort in the fact that God is "the creator and bishop of every spirit." [2] This was genuinely Jewish and may, of course, have been felt by many Christians, but there is little indication of it in our primitive sources.[3]

Nor is there any sign that the doctrine of creation received any special attention from the earliest Christians. It is only in the works of the theologians of the second and following centuries that we find the matter discussed at length and argued about as if it were of importance. From the writings of these theologians it is evident that creation was more to them than a

[1] 1 Clement, 33 : 2–4; cf. also 1 Clement, 19 : 2; 20 : 11; 59 : 3; 62 : 2; Aristides, 15 : 3; 17 : 1; Justin Martyr, Apology, II, 6 : 2, etc.

[2] 1 Clement, 59 : 3.

[3] According to Clement of Alexandria (Paedagogus 1 : 3) man is dear to God because he is his handiwork, but the Alexandrian Clement belonged to the latter part of the second century, a hundred years later than the author of 1 Peter and Clement of Rome.

mere item in the Jewish doctrine of God; it had an independent value of its own. What that value was is suggested by their constant insistence upon Christ's part in creation.

As already said in an earlier lecture, Paul spoke of the Son and John of the Logos as the agent of creation; and while the creation is commonly ascribed to God by the early fathers, they usually bring Christ into connection with it, representing God as creating through Christ or the Logos. Thus it is said in the epistle of Barnabas: "If the Lord endured to suffer for our life, though Lord of all the world, to whom God said from the foundation of the world 'Let us make man in our image and likeness,' how did he endure to suffer at the hand of man?" [1] In the anonymous epistle to Diognetus it is said, God sent "the artificer and creator of the universe himself by whom he made the heavens, by whom he enclosed the sea in its own bounds." [2] With this may be compared the following passage from Theophilus: "God having his own Logos within, in his own bowels, begat him, together with his own wisdom, emitting him before all things. He had the Logos as a helper in the things that were created by him, and through him he made all things." [3] It would thus seem that the doctrine

[1] Barnabas, 5 : 5.
[2] Epistle to Diognetus, 7 : 2.
[3] Theophilus, To Autolycus, II, 10; cf. also Tatian, 5; Athenagoras, 4, 6, 10; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, V, chap. III, 16; chap. XIV, 100 : 4.

of Christ's agency in creation was valuable to the fathers because it served again to bring Christianity into a larger setting and connect it with the very structure of the world.

The belief that Christ took part in the work of creation is of great significance. It meant linking salvation up with creation, and it gave Christianity a unique place among the saving cults of the age, for no other cult identified the saving God with the creating God. Indeed, none of them was particularly interested in creation. Connecting salvation with creation and making the Saviour Christ the creator or the agent of creation, Christian theologians supplied a cosmological basis for the tremendous claim of the Christians that theirs was the only way of salvation, a basis of the strongest possible kind.

How widely it was believed among the early Gentile Christians that the world was created by the Christian God we do not know. But opposition to the belief seems to have appeared first in Gnosticism, which flourished particularly in the second century. The Gnostics, as remarked in a previous lecture, were dualists who were led by the evil in the world to deny that the world was made by the Christian God, and to assign its origin to another being altogether. The framer of the world, or demiurge, according to many of the Gnostics the last in a long series of divine æons or emanations, be-

came the agent by whom elements from the higher spiritual world from which he was descended were mingled with the primeval chaos, thus transforming it into a cosmos. This demiurge was identified with the God of the Old Testament, whose creative activity is described in the Book of Genesis. Having acted wholly in ignorance of the higher world of which he was the offspring, he supposed himself to be the supreme God and gave himself out as such and as such was worshipped by the Jews. According to Irenæus: "A certain Cerinthus, educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, said that the world was not made by the first God but by a certain power separate and at a distance from the power who is over the universe, and ignorant of the God who is over all." [1] Again, speaking of the followers of Valentinus, Irenæus says: "They say that he (i. e., the demiurge) was made father and god of the things outside the pleroma, being creator of all animal and material things. . . . Being too feeble to know spiritual things, he thought that he alone was god, and declared through the prophets 'I am God; besides me there is no one.'" [2] And of Basilides: "Those angels who inhabit the lower heaven, which is visible to us, formed all the things that are in the world and divided among themselves the earth and the nations upon it.

[1] Irenæus, Against Heresies, I, 26: 1.
[2] Ibid., I, 5: 2, 4.

The chief of them is he who is thought to be God of the Jews." [1]

It is instructive to notice in this connection that neither the Gnostics nor their theological opponents were satisfied with a single divine being. The latter, as well as the former, under the influence of a common philosophical tendency, were compelled to assume another being (or beings) between God and the world, whether for creation or redemption. In other words they were all dualists, but the orthodox theologians identified the creator and the saviour, while the Gnostics, in their more extreme dualism, declined to do so. One can hardly avoid the conclusion that the difference between them was due to more than a mere difference in the degree of their dualism, that it was rooted in religious and ethical instincts which made Judaism congenial to the one and uncongenial to the other.

Closely related to the Gnostics was the heresiarch Marcion, who has also been referred to in an earlier lecture. He began not with the Gnostic dualism between God and the world, but with the dualism between the redeeming God revealed by Christ, a God of pure love and mercy, and the just and stern God of the Jews, whom he found depicted in the Old Testament. It seemed to him impossible that these two could be the same God, and he therefore rejected the Jewish God in favor of the Christian God pro-

[1] Ibid., I, 24 : 4.

claimed by Christ. The supreme God, according to Marcion, was entirely unknown to the world until the coming of his Son, whom he sent to redeem men and release them from the control of the demiurge, or world creator. Redemption is spiritual only; not men's bodies but their souls alone are capable of salvation, and it is accomplished wholly by spiritual means, by the influence of divine love. The Christian God does not punish or threaten, he does not even judge men, but wins them exclusively by love. The Christian God has nothing to do with the world of things, and though he is the supreme God, his sphere is that of the spirit alone. He neither created nor controls the physical world. Marcion thus had a splendid faith in moral influence and in the supremacy of spiritual values. He stands out among his contemporaries as a singularly interesting figure, in some respects unique in history until quite modern times.

But, unfortunately, he did not stop with reading the Christian God wholly in moral terms. He accepted the Gnostic theory of creation and made the world the work of the demiurge, the Jahveh of the Jews. It was quite unnecessary for him to take this step. All the values he was interested in were secure without it. On his own principles divine creation and physical control were unimportant, and the origin of the world religiously a matter of indifference. But the Gnostic doctrine lay ready to his hand, and pro-

vided him with an easy explanation of the existing world and also of the religion of the Jews in which Christianity had its roots. By adopting it, however, he laid himself open to all the objections that lay against Gnosticism and distracted attention from his real gospel, which never got a fair hearing from the church at large. It would have been an admirable thing if the issue could have been clearly drawn at that early day between a god of moral and a god of physical power. Instead the issue hinged on the quite extraneous question of the origin of the world and the existence of one god or two. There was no reason in the nature of the case why Marcion should have concerned himself with a doctrine of creation. There were plenty then as now who thought the world self-explanatory and in need of no creator, and his fundamental interest being what it was, he would have done much better had he contented himself with their agnosticism. As it was, his system was beset with all the evils of Gnostic dualism, and it is not strange that he was confounded with the Gnostics and rejected together with them.

But quite apart from this, his interpretation of the Christian God in exclusively moral terms was unacceptable to his Christian contemporaries. Salvation, as they understood it, was physical as well as spiritual, and included the resurrection of the flesh. Moreover, unless God has physical power, there can be no adequate

punishment of evil-doers, and hence no sufficient deterrent from sin. Divine providence, so beautifully depicted by Jesus, is also impossible where there is no physical control, and in general a lack of physical power argues a weak and imperfect God and contradicts the teaching of Christ and of the Old Testament. In other words, genuinely Christian as Marcion was in his controlling interest, he sacrificed religious values precious and even indispensable to the mass of Christians, and was consequently condemned, together with the Gnostics with whom he was identified. The denial of divine creation thus became a heresy and the doctrine itself was made permanently an essential part of the orthodox Christian system. The opening words of the old Roman symbol—"I believe in God the Father almighty"—were meant to assert God's creation and control of the world in opposition to Marcion's denial of it, and the assertion was subsequently made still more explicit by the addition of the words "maker of heaven and earth." Similarly the Nicene creed, the one œcumenical symbol of the Christian church, begins with the words "I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."

Though the doctrine of divine creation was thus insisted upon and made a part of the orthodox faith, there was for some time a difference of opinion as to whether God created the world

out of nothing or formed it out of pre-existing materials. The Hebrew Old Testament is silent upon the subject, but in 2 Maccabees 7 : 28 the mother of the Maccabees is represented as saying: "Look up unto the heaven and the earth and see all things that are therein, and know that God made them out of things that were not" (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων). Later this became a common Jewish doctrine. The earliest assertion of a creation out of nothing in Christian literature is found in the Shepherd of Hermas, a writing of the early second century: "First of all believe that God is one: who made all things and perfected them and made all things to be out of that which was not" (ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος).[1]

On the other hand, some writers, both Jewish and Christian, represented God as creating the world out of pre-existing matter of one sort or another. The opening verses of the first chapter of Genesis suggest a dark and watery chaos existing before God began to create; and the Book of Wisdom 11 : 17 refers to "thine all-powerful hand that created the world out of formless matter" (ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης). Similarly it is said in Justin Martyr's first Apology: "We have been taught that in the beginning, being good, he created (δημιουργῆσαι) all things out of unformed matter (ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης) for the sake of men."[2] With which may be compared the

[1] Mandate, 1; cf. also Vision, I, 1 : 6; Aristides, 4; Tatian, 5; Theophilus, I, 4; II, 4, 10; Irenæus, II, 28 : 7, etc.

[2] Justin, Apology, I, 10.

words of 2 Peter: "This they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old and an earth put together out of water and through water (ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος) by the word of God" (3 : 5).

This was a common Greek idea, the notion that something could be made out of nothing being generally regarded as wholly irrational; and it was very likely under Greek influence that it was shared by certain Jews and Christians. It was also the view of Hermogenes, a Christian artist of the late second and early third centuries. He accepted the doctrine of divine creation, but maintained that in creating, God made use of matter that had existed independently of him from all eternity.

We have an interesting polemic against him from the pen of Tertullian, the earliest extant discussion of the subject of creation ex nihilo. Hermogenes's own work is lost, but according to Tertullian he argued that God must have made the world from himself, from nothing or from something. He could not have made it from himself, for his nature is indivisible and unchangeable, nor from nothing, for then he would have made it free from all evil. The only possible alternative is that he made it out of something, and that the evil in it is due to the stuff out of which it was made. Hermogenes begins, so Tertullian says, "with the premise that the Lord made all things out of himself or out of nothing,

or out of something, in order that after he has shown that God could not have made things either out of himself or out of nothing, he may go on to affirm that he made them out of something and that that something was matter. He denies that God could have made things out of himself, because whatever the Lord made out of himself would have been a part of himself; but he is not divisible into parts, being indivisible and unchangeable and always the same. . . . Again he contends that God could not have created things out of nothing, because the Lord, being good and perfect, must have willed to make all things good and perfect as he is himself. At least, he could not will to make anything not good and perfect. Therefore all things must have been made by him good and perfect according to his own condition. But we find that evil things have been made by him. This, of course, could not have been of his own will or pleasure, because, if he had acted of his own will and pleasure, he would have made nothing incongruous and unworthy of himself. It ought to be known therefore that he made things thus not voluntarily but because of the evil of that from which they were made, that is without doubt from matter." [1]

Hermogenes believed in one supreme God, the creator, as truly as Tertullian, but he felt the moral difficulty involved in the belief as it has

[1] Tertullian, Against Hermogenes, chap. 2.

been felt by many since, and met the difficulty by holding matter responsible instead of God; that is, he regarded God as limited by the materials which he had to use.

Later in his work Tertullian quotes a passage from Hermogenes indicating that the eternal matter out of which the world was made was in itself neither good nor evil. Tertullian regards this as a flagrant contradiction on Hermogenes's part, but in this he was probably wrong. The truth seems to have been that Hermogenes ascribed the evil in the world not to the nature of matter itself, but to the limitations put on the divine activity by the use of existing materials. Matter he thought of in good Platonic fashion as a seething, formless mass upon which order was stamped by the creator. While not in itself evil, its perfect ordering can be accomplished only gradually and little by little, and in this lack of perfect order lies the ground of the evil in the world. At this point, as well as in his assertion of the unchangeableness and indivisibility of the divine nature, Hermogenes represented a different school of thought from the Gnostics, to whom matter was essentially evil and whose doctrine of emanations involved both the divisibility and changeableness of the divine nature; involved, indeed, a theory of evolution on a large scale.

The existence of evil in the world, the principal ground of Hermogenes's belief in the eternity

of matter, Tertullian does not attempt to explain in this work. He only contends that God is as much responsible for evil in using evil matter for the creation of the world as if he had created evil directly of his own free will, and that it is just as bad to produce evil out of matter as to produce it ex nihilo. It is interesting to notice that he agrees with Hermogenes that evil was not necessary in order to enhance the splendor of the good, as was maintained by the Stoics, and has been maintained by many Christian theologians since.

Though Tertullian did not discuss the origin of evil in his tract against Hermogenes, he dealt with it in his work against Marcion, and there ascribed it to the free will of man, who yielded to the temptation of the devil and fell into sin.[1] This was the common patristic explanation of the origin of evil, God being relieved of the responsibility for it by tracing it back to the free will of the creature whether man or demon.[2]

The great Alexandrian father, Origen, put the beginning of sin both in demons and men before the creation of the world. All spirits were originally created free and equal, but some remained steadfast in their allegiance to God, others rebelled against him and fell into wickedness. To redeem and lead back to God certain of these

[1] Against Marcion, II, 5–6.

[2] Cf. Justin, Apology, I, 10; Tatian, 7 ff.; 11; 17; Theophilus, II, 17; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, IV, chap. XIII, 93–94; Origen, Against Celsus, IV, 66.

fallen spirits, the world was created as a place of discipline and training.[1] By this grandiose conception, borrowed from Plato and shared by some of the Gnostics,[2] God was relieved of responsibility for the glaring inequalities in human birth and status.

So far as the particular sins of individuals were concerned, according to Origen many simple-minded Christians traced them all to the instigation of demons, but, with his usual careful discrimination, he distinguished between those which were to be thus accounted for and others that were due to men's natural desires, in themselves innocent but easily running to excess.[3] Elsewhere Origen remarks that some evils, relatively few and unimportant, have resulted from God's creative activity, as shavings and sawdust are a by-product of the carpenter's work.[4] He recognized also that corporeal or external evils were sent by God for the sake of discipline and chastisement. He thus explained Isaiah 45 : 7 and other passages in the Old Testament, which declared God the source of evil as well as good.[5]

Similarly Tertullian, in his tract on Flight in

[1] Cf. De principiis, II, 9 : 6.
[2] E. g., by Basilides, according to Clement, Stromata, IV, chap. XII, 83 : 2.
[3] De principiis, III, 2; cf. also Basilides, ibid., chap. XII, 81–82.
[4] Against Celsus, VI, 55.
[5] Against Celsus, VI, 56; cf. De principiis, III, 2 : 7, and Tertullian, Against Marcion, II, 14.

Persecution, asserted that all things happen in accordance with the will of God, and that even persecution comes from him—not from the devil, as many supposed—for the purpose of trying and disciplining the saints.[1] This was also the view of the Gnostic Basilides, who saw in persecution evidence that the martyrs were sinners like other men and so deserved to suffer, but by martyrdom had an enviable opportunity of expiating their sin.[2] The following passage from the Clementine Homilies, a Christian romance of the third century, is worth quoting in this connection: "He who has comprehended that the world is governed by the good providence of God, O dear Clement, is not troubled by things however they happen, being confident that things turn out happily under the administration of the ruler. Whence knowing that he is just, and living with a good conscience, such a one understands how to shake off from his soul by right reason the distress that has befallen him, because he sees that it can yet be crowned by some unknown good." [3]

On the other hand, Clement of Alexandria drew a distinction between the active and permissive will of God, maintaining that persecutions and like evils were not sent by God, but

[1] Tertullian, De fuga in persecutione, chap. 1.
[2] According to Clement, Stromata, IV, chap. XII, 81–82.
[3] Clementine Homilies, II, 36; cf. also Origen, Against Celsus, VI, 53.

were permitted by him and then overruled for the good of those who suffered them.[1]

All through the effort of the fathers to relieve God of responsibility for evil, or so to interpret evil as to make it a means of good is very noticeable. The naïveté with which certain Hebrew writers traced evil as well as good back to God without feeling obliged to apologize for him or to justify his ways to men was radically different from the attitude of the fathers of the first three centuries. To think of God as the author of evil seemed to most of the latter, as well as to the Gnostics, blasphemous in the extreme. Tatian and Theophilus were but voicing the common sentiment when they declared that God created nothing evil.[2] As the Gnostic Basilides put it in emphatic words: "I will affirm all things rather than call providence evil." [3]

To return to Hermogenes, another reason urged by him for the eternity of matter was that God would not always have been God had there not always existed something for him to exercise authority over. In other words, Hermogenes interpreted God as a relational concept. Tertullian's answer is very interesting. God, he says, was always God in himself, but he was not Lord until there were others over whom

[1] Clement, Stromata, IV, chap. XII, 87; cf. also Origen, De principiis, III, 2 : 7.
[2] Tatian, Apology, 11; Theophilus, To Autolycus, II, 17.
[3] According to Clement, Stromata, IV, chap. XII, 82 : 2.

he could exercise lordship. He then appeals in support of his position to the difference of usage in connection with the name of God in the early chapters of Genesis, a difference which modern scholars explain as due to the employment of two documents—the so-called Elohistic and Jahvistic. "Scripture wholly supports us when it distinguishes two names and reveals them each at its proper time. For the name God, indeed, which always belonged to him, it mentions at the very start: 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth'; and then as long as he continued making those things of which he was to be the Lord, it mentions God alone: 'and God said,' 'and God made,' 'and God saw'; and as yet nowhere the Lord. But when he had completed everything, and especially man himself, who was destined to recognize him peculiarly as Lord, he is then called Lord. Then also the Scripture added the name Lord: 'And God the Lord took the man whom He had formed'; 'And the Lord God commanded Adam.' Thenceforth he who was previously God only was Lord, from the time of his having something of which he might be Lord. For to himself he was God, but to things he was only then God when he was also Lord." [1]

Tertullian's principal arguments against the eternity of matter and in favor of creation ex nihilo are as follows. If matter were eternal it

[1] Against Hermogenes, chap. 3.

would be equal to God, for eternity is the essential quality of deity.[1] Thus there would be two gods instead of one, and thus also it would be impossible for God to exercise authority over matter and make use of it for his own purposes.[2] Matter, indeed, on Hermogenes's theory is even greater than God, for it supplies the material out of which the world is made and imposes necessity upon God in his use of it.[3] Still further, if eternal, matter would be unchangeable and indivisible, as God himself is, and hence on Hermogenes's own principles nothing could be made from it any more than from God himself.[4] The metaphysical character of this familiar argument from eternity to indivisibility and unchangeableness is abundantly evident.

Again, if matter had no beginning it will have no end, and hence on Hermogenes's own assumption that matter is evil, evil will never disappear.[5] This argument sounds strange enough coming from a man who believed, as Tertullian did, in the everlasting existence and punishment of Satan and wicked men.

Still worse, if matter be eternal, and the world was created out of it rather than out of nothing,

[1] This explains the frequent reference on the part of the fathers to salvation as deification.

[2] Against Hermogenes, chaps. 4, 7, 9; cf. also Theophilus, To Autolycus, II, 27.

[3] Against Hermogenes, chaps. 8, 13, 42.

[4] Cf. ibid., chap. 12 and Theophilus, II, 4.

[5] Cf. Against Hermogenes, chap. 2.

God was subjected to necessity and his liberty destroyed, an assumption wholly unworthy of God. "Liberty, not necessity, comports with God. I prefer that he should have willed to create evil things freely rather than that he should have been unable to refrain from creating." [1] "Which then is worthier, that he created evil things of necessity or voluntarily? For he created them of necessity if he created them out of matter; he created them voluntarily if out of nothing. For now it is in vain that you are laboring to show that God is not the author of evil things, because even if he made them from matter they will have to be imputed to him who made them, no matter how he made them. Thus evidently it is important whence he made them, especially if he made them out of nothing; but it is not important whence he made them provided he made them whence it was most seemly for him. But it is more seemly for him to have created voluntarily than under necessity, that is, out of nothing than out of matter. It is more worthy to believe that God is the free author even of evil things than to believe that he is a slave. Power of whatever sort better becomes him than pusillanimity." [2]

This insistence upon the freedom of God was common among the fathers. Thus Irenæus says: "It is not seemly to say of him who is God over all, when he is free and independent, that he

[1] Ibid., chap. 16. [2] Ibid., chap. 14.

was a slave to necessity, or that anything happened by his permission against his judgment. Otherwise necessity will be made greater and more controlling than God, since that which has more power is more ancient than all."[1] According to many of the fathers, the difference between a theistic and atheistic interpretation of the universe lay just at this point. He that believes all things are ruled by necessity is an atheist. The theist must insist upon the control of the world by a free being who can act as he pleases.

To return to Tertullian: in the last sentence quoted from him—"Power of whatever sort better becomes God than pusillanimity"—we find the real secret of his insistence upon creation ex nihilo. To create out of nothing argues much greater power on God's part than to create out of something, and hence alone comports with his omnipotence.[2] With this may be compared the following passage from Tertullian's older contemporary, Theophilus, who also wrote a work against Hermogenes which is no longer extant: "But what great thing is it if God made the world out of existing matter? For even a human artist when he gets the material from some one makes out of it whatever he pleases. But God's power is manifest in this that

[1] Irenæus, Against Heresies, II, 5 : 4; cf. also II, 30 : 9; Theophilus, II, 4; Lactantius, On the Anger of God, chap. 13; and Clementine Homilies, IV, 13, and XV, 4 f.

[2] Cf. also chaps. 8 and 9.

he makes whatever he pleases out of nothing; as also to give life and movement belongs to no one else than God alone. For a man makes an image, but he cannot give reason and breath and feeling to the thing he has made. But God possesses more than he in that he can make a rational, breathing, and feeling being. As therefore in all these respects God is more powerful than man, so also in this respect, that out of things that are not he makes and has made things that are, whatever he pleases and as he pleases." [1]

Doubtless this consideration had most to do with the general acceptance of the doctrine of creation ex nihilo. So far as religious and ethical values are concerned they would seem to be conserved by Hermogenes's theory as well as by Tertullian's, with the advantage that by the former God is relieved of the odium of being the author of evil. But Jewish monotheism, inherited by Christianity, was of such a sort as to make any limitations upon the power of God seem impious, and when it was once realized that the use of pre-existing materials in the work of creation put such limitations upon him, the vogue of the doctrine of ex-nihilo creation was inevitable both in Judaism and in Christianity.

Already before the middle of the third century Origen represents creation out of nothing as a part of the teaching of the apostles and the

[1] Theophilus, To Autolycus, II, 4; cf. also Irenæus, II, 10:4.

creed of the church. "The particular points which are clearly delivered through the apostolic teaching are these: first that there is one God who created and arranged all things and who when there was nothing, made all things to be."[1] And in his work on the Incarnation Athanasius declares that "the faith of Christ teaches thus."[2] Henceforth creation out of nothing was generally regarded both in East and West as alone orthodox.

The creation of the world, according to the fathers, was not for God's sake, for he was in need of nothing, but for the sake of man.[3] "Do you not understand the glory of God, how great and mighty and wonderful it is, for he created the world for man's sake and made his whole creation subject to man, and gave him all power that he might rule over all things under heaven?"[4] Elsewhere Hermas represents the world as created for the sake of the church: "A revelation was made to me, brethren, while I slept, by a most beautiful young man who said to me, 'Who do you think the old lady was from whom you received the little book?' 'The sibyl,' I replied. 'You are wrong,' he said, 'it was not

[1] De principiis, pref., 4. [2] De incarnatione, chap. 3.

[3] This was also the belief of the Stoics, and is found in Philo and the Sibylline Oracles (see Geffcken, Zwei griechische Apologeten, pp. 33, 36).

[4] Hermas, Mandate, 12:4; cf. Justin, Apology, I, 10; II, 4; Athenagoras, 16; Theophilus, II, 10; Epistle to Diognetus, 10; Irenæus, III, 25:5; V, 29; Clementine Homilies, III, 36; XI, 23; Lactantius, Divine Institutes, VII, 4.

she.' 'Who was it, then?' I asked. 'The church,' he replied. 'Why then was she old?' I inquired. 'Because,' he said, 'she was created first of all things; for this reason is she old, and on her account the world was created.'" [1] With this may be compared the statement of Clement of Alexandria that the world was created for the sake of good men.[2]

There is a long and interesting discussion of the matter in Origen's work Against Celsus, where he defends the position that the world was created for man's sake against Celsus' taunt that it was created as much for plants and animals as for men; that is, that the same arguments apply in the one case as in the other. "He supposes in the first place," Origen says, "that thunder and lightning and rain are not the works of God, thus clearly showing his Epicureanism. In the second place, he says that even if one were to grant that these works were God's they are done not more for the support of us men than of plants and trees and herbs and briers, maintaining like a true Epicurean that these things happen by chance and not by providence. . . . Then he continues, 'Even if you say that these things, that is, plants and

[1] Hermas, Vis., 2:4.

[2] Clement, Stromata, VII, chap. VII, 48:1. According to Lactantius the world, including the heavenly bodies, was created for the sake of man, but man himself for the sake of God, that God might have intelligent beings to admire and worship him (On the Anger of God, chaps. 13–14).

trees and herbs and briers, grow for men, why do you say that they grow for men rather than for the most savage, irrational beasts?' Let Celsus therefore say clearly that so great a variety of plants on earth is not due to providence, but that a certain conjunction of atoms produced such qualities; that by chance such species of plants and trees and herbs resemble each other, and that no skilled reason gave them existence, nor did they have their origin from a mind surpassing all admiration. But we Christians, being devoted to the only God who created these things, are also grateful to their creator for them, because he made ready such a home for us and on our account for the beasts that serve us."[1] Celsus' attitude sounds quite modern compared with Origen's.

In declaring that creation was for the sake of man, Origen referred only to the creation of this world, which was preceded by an eternal spiritual universe, whose existence was due not to regard for men or any other creatures, but to the necessity of the divine nature. Among the spiritual beings created in eternity, there were some who fell from their high estate into sin. For the sake of their redemption the world was created that it might be a place of discipline for them. The world therefore was created for man's sake, but man himself and the rest of the spiritual universe had another reason altogether.

[1] Against Celsus, IV, 75; cf. also IV, 99.

God is spirit, and as spirit he must be active, or, in other words, he must eternally create. We are reminded by this of Jonathan Edwards's striking Dissertation on the End for which God Created the World, in which he ascribes creation to the inherent propensity of the divine nature to diffuse itself. Of course the common source of both was the later Platonism.

Origen's theory was not generally accepted. Most of the fathers found the end of creation solely in the good of man. To many of them, indeed, the creation of the world was the great evidence of God's goodness and love, not simply of his power. As Irenæus puts it: "In the beginning God made Adam, not as if he were in need of man, but that he might have some one on whom to bestow his benefits." [1]

It would seem that one's attitude at this point must depend in part at least upon one's estimate of the world. But though Tertullian thought very contemptuously of the world and condemned it in unsparing terms, he yet shared the common opinion that its creation was an evidence of divine goodness,[2] which shows perhaps that his notion of divine goodness was more formal than real.

As creator of the world and of men, God was

[1] Against Heresies, IV, 14:1; cf. IV, 38:3; 39:2; Clement, Stromata, VI, chap. XVII, 152; Origen, De principiis, II, 9:6. Plato also maintained that God created the world because he was good.

[2] Cf. Against Marcion, II, 4, 5, 12, etc.

commonly spoken of as Father, as he was also by Jews and Greeks. Thus Clement of Rome refers to him as "father and creator of the whole world." [1] Justin uses the word frequently in the sense of creator. Theophilus says: "He is Father because he was before all things" [2]; and according to Lactantius: "He alone is to be called Father who created; he alone is to be called Lord who rules." [3] As already said, it is in the sense of creator that the word Father is used in the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God the Father almighty." [4]

Sometimes, to be sure, the term father was used particularly to denote God's love and mercy: "You see, beloved, how great is the protection for those that are chastened by the master; for he is a good father and chastens us that we may obtain mercy through his holy chastisement." [5] "You will say to me, is God angry? Yes, he is angry with those who do wicked things, but good and kind and merciful to those who love and fear him, for he is an instructor of the pious and a father of the righteous, but a judge and punisher of the ungodly." [6] "Thus far then justice is the very fulness of divinity

[1] 1 Clement, chap. 19; cf. chap. 35.
[2] Theophilus, To Autolycus, I, 4.
[3] Divine Institutes, IV, 4; cf. also Athenagoras, 27; Origen, De principiis, I, 4: 1; II, 1: 2; Against Celsus, VII, 43; Tertullian, Against Marcion, IV, 26; V, 4.
[4] Cf. my Apostles' Creed, p. 108.
[5] 1 Clement, 56: 16; cf. also 23: 1; 29: 1.
[6] Theophilus, To Autolycus, I, 3.

itself, manifesting God as both a perfect father and lord—a father in mercy, a lord in discipline, a father in mildness, a lord in severity, a father who must be piously loved, a lord who must needs be feared."[1] Commonly, however, the term father was used of God, either as creator of the world and men, or as the father of Christ; sometimes also of Christians.[2]

It was also the common opinion of the fathers that the world was created by God at a definite period of time.[3] The account in Genesis was understood literally, at any rate by some, probably by most of them, and it was assumed that when the six days' work was done creation came to an end.[4] On the other hand, the Alexandrian theologian, Origen, made creation an eternal process. As a spirit God is necessarily active, that is, creative, and there can therefore never have been a time when he was not creating. Had there been such a time he would then not have been God.

Closely related to Origen's interpretation was that of the great Latin father, Augustine. He did not make creation eternal as Origen did. Creation implies change and change implies time; creation therefore took place not in time but with time. "If eternity and time are rightly

[1] Tertullian, Against Marcion, II, 13; cf. IV, 26.
[2] Cf. Cyprian on the Lord's Prayer, 10, and Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, VI, chap. VI, 47: 2.
[3] Cf. Justin, Apology, I, 67; Irenæus, II, 28, 3.
[4] Cf. Theophilus, II, 11 ff.

distinguished by this, that time does not exist without any movement or change, while in eternity there is no change, who does not see that there would have been no time had there not been a creature which by some motion might give birth to some change? As the parts of this motion and change, which cannot exist simultaneously, give way and follow one another, in the briefer and more protracted intervals of duration time comes to be. Since God, then, in whose eternity there is no change at all, is the creator and ordainer of time, I do not see how he can be said to have created the world after a lapse of time, unless it be said that before the world there was already some creature by whose movements time could elapse. The Holy Scriptures, most true as they are, say that in the beginning God made heaven and earth, that it might be known that he had made nothing previously, for if he had made anything before all the other things which he made, it would have been said rather that that was made in the beginning. Therefore it is surely not doubtful that the world was made not in time but with time."[1]

But more important than this distinction between time and eternity was Augustine's opinion that creation is continuous, not instantaneous, an opinion identical with Origen's, but expressed even more definitely and explicitly. Not simply at the very beginning of time did God create all

[1] Augustine, De civitate Dei, XI, 6; so also Plato in the Timæus.

things out of nothing, he is continually creating them out of nothing, he is the resident power in all that exists and without him nothing continues in existence for a moment.[1] This opinion of Augustine's was accepted by later theologians and became the common doctrine of the Church of the Middle Ages. God, it was generally believed, is constantly needed to preserve the world and all that is in it, and preservation is nothing else than continuous creation.

All through, the philosophical character of the patristic doctrine of creation is abundantly manifest. There is little evidence that it had religious or ethical value to those who accepted it, such as it has had to many modern theologians. As already remarked, however, the recognition of the Christian God as the creator of the world brought Christianity into a larger setting and thus met a fundamental apologetic need. And it is this that I am particularly interested to emphasize in connection with the doctrine.

Those of the early Christians who believed in God as creator thought of him also as providential ruler of the world. Upon his providence, indeed, great emphasis was laid in opposition to the astrologers who thought all things subject to fate, the Epicureans who claimed that God had no interest in the world and its concerns,

[1] Cf. De Genesi ad litteram, IV, 12.

and the Gnostics who distinguished the supreme God from the creator.[1] Often it was not simply a general providence the fathers were thinking of, but a special providence of the most minute kind, such as Jesus believed in. Thus Origen says: "To such a degree does divine providence comprehend all things that not even the hairs of the head escape numbering by him." [2]

In a previous lecture I remarked that Paul associated Christ with God not only in creating the world but also in ruling over it. God "made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, above all rule and authority, and power, and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet." The words of the 110th Psalm, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool," were applied to the Messiah by Jesus, according to the Synoptic Gospels, and to Jesus himself by Peter, according to the Book of Acts. These words are frequently quoted and applied to Christ in the writings of the early Christians,[3] and it might

[1] Cf., e. g., Tatian, 9; Athenagoras, 25; Irenæus, III, 25, 1; Minucius Felix, 17 ff.; Clementine Homilies, XIV, 5; XV, 4.

[2] Origen, Against Celsus, VIII, 70; cf. also Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, I, chap. XI, 50–52; IV, chap. XII; V, chap. I, 6; VI, chap. XVII, 153 ff.; Tertullian, De exhortatione castitatis, chap. I; Novatian, De Trinitate, chap. 8.

[3] E. g., Heb. 1 : 13; 1 Clement, 36; Justin, Apology, 45, and Dialogue, 32, 36; Irenæus, III, 6 : 1; Tertullian, Against Marcion, IV, 41.

be thought that they sufficiently account for the many references in early Christian literature to Christ's session at the right hand of God or to his ruling over the world, as, for instance: "Wherefore girding up your loins serve God in fear and truth, and putting aside empty vanity and the error of the many, believe in him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and gave him glory and a throne at his right hand; to whom are subject all things in heaven and in earth, whom every one that hath breath serveth." [1] And again, "Our Jesus Christ, being crucified and dead, rose again and having ascended to heaven, reigned." [2]

But the reference to the session at God's right hand in the old Roman Symbol, the original of our Apostles' creed, was due, I think without doubt, to the desire to emphasize Christ's connection with the almighty God of the first article, and it may well have been a similar interest that led to the mention of it, at any rate in some other cases. As a matter of fact, that Christ is ruler of the world as well as creator was frequently asserted without any reference to his ascension or session at God's right hand.[3] As it seemed important to associate Christ with

[1] Polycarp, Epistle to the Philippians, chap. 2.

[2] Justin, Apology, I, 42; cf. also Acts 7:55, 56; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; Tertullian, Against Marcion, IV, 42.

[3] For instance, in Barnabas 5:5; Tertullian, Against Marcion, II, 27; Cyprian, Epistle, 64:2; Origen, De principiis, II, 3:2; Against Celsus, III, 37.

God in the work of creation, so also it may have seemed important to associate him with God in his activity as ruler of the world, that the connection between the two might be as close as possible. Irenæus speaks of "God the Father who rules over all, and his Son who received from his Father dominion over all creation" [1]; and Origen remarks: "Because such things could not be discovered by men with perfect accuracy it was not thought safe for man to trust himself to any one as God, except only to Jesus Christ, as ruler over all, who both saw these most secret things, and committed them to a few." [2]

Again, as the Jews had done, the early Christians thought of God not only as creator and providential ruler, but also as judge of the world. The judgment, indeed, was made much of, and particularly in opposition to Marcion, who denied it altogether, it was emphasized as a cardinal article of the Christian faith.[3] Our sources, both early and late, have a great deal to say upon the subject and make it abundantly evident that from the beginning it had a controlling place in the thought of the church. Unless God were to judge the world, so it was generally

[1] Against Heresies, III, 6: 1.
[2] Against Celsus, III, 37; cf. also Hermas, Sim., IX, 14: 5; Justin Martyr, Apology, I, 12; Irenæus, V, 18: 3.
[3] Cf. the article on the judgment in the old Roman Symbol.

believed, there would be no adequate incentive to virtue or deterrent from vice. As Tertullian put it: "You read that the way of evil is broad and much frequented. Would not all glide down that road were there nothing in it to fear?"[1]

We hear a great deal about the fear of God in the early fathers. Often the word is used, it would seem, in the ordinary Jewish sense of reverence, but often it carries with it the notion of the divine judgment which demands fear on the part of men. This appears clearly enough in such passages as the following: "Since then all things are seen and heard let us fear him and abandon evil desires and wicked deeds that we may be sheltered by his mercy from the judgments to come." [2] "Listen then to me and fear him who has all power to save and destroy and keep these commandments and you shall live unto God." [3]

The writings of the fathers contain many references to divine judgment and the punishment of the wicked, and also some, though fewer, to the wrath of God and his justice as expressed in punishing.[4] The apologist Aristides, in

[1] Against Marcion, II, 13; cf. Lactantius, On the Anger of God, chap. 12.

[2] 1 Clement, 28: 1.

[3] Hermas, Mandate, XII, 6: 3; cf. also ibid., I, VII; 2 Clement 18: 1; Tatian, Apology, 4.

[4] For instance, Theophilus, I, 3; Irenæus, IV, 28: 1; Tertullian, Against Marcion, I, 26; V, 5, 13, 14. There is an interesting discussion of the divine wrath in Origen's work, Against Celsus, IV, 72.

agreement with the Stoics and with Philo, denied the wrath of God, asserting that he is above anger as well as all other passions (*ἀνώτερον πάντων τῶν παθῶν καὶ ἐλατωμάτων, ὀργῆς τε καὶ λήθης καὶ ἀγνοίας καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν*).[1] As already seen, this was also the opinion of Marcion, though on other grounds. On the other hand, most of the fathers took an altogether different position, maintaining that for the righteous government of the world divine hatred and anger are as necessary as divine love and mercy. This was emphasized particularly in opposition to Marcion.

In his tract, On the Anger of God, Lactantius, early in the fourth century, argued vigorously for the wrath of God, not against Marcion but against the Epicureans and Stoics. He drew a careful distinction between righteous and unrighteous anger, insisting in the same way Tertullian had done in his work against Marcion, that the former is as essential in the character of God as love and mercy, and that without it God would not be God. "If God is not angry with the impious and unjust, he does not love the pious and just. Therefore the error of those is more consistent who take away at once both anger and kindness. For in diverse matters it is necessary to choose both or neither. Thus he who loves the good, also hates the wicked,

[1] Apology, chap. 1. See also Epistle to Diognetus, 8:8; and cf. Geffcken, op. cit., p. 40.

and he who does not hate the wicked does not love the good; because the loving of the good comes from the hatred of the wicked, and the hating of the wicked follows from the love of the good." [1] "Neither can any honor be due to God, if he bestows nothing on him who worships, nor any fear, if he is not angry with him who does not worship." [2]

But in spite of the frequent references to the wrath of God against sinners, they are far less numerous than to his goodness and kindness and love. The writings of the fathers, indeed, both early and late, have much to say of the divine goodness. "God, who is perfectly good, is eternally doing good." [3] "He was always such and is and will be, kind and good and without wrath and true; and he alone is good." [4] "God loves all existing things." [5] "The love of God, being rich and without envy, gives more than one asks of it." [6] "A good God we have known; from his Christ we learn that he is the only God and very good." [7] "Oh, surpassing love for man! Not as the teacher to his pupils, not as the master to his domestics, not as God to men, but as a gentle father he admonishes his sons." [8]

[1] Lactantius, On the Anger of God, chap. 5; cf. chap. 17.
[2] Ibid., chap. 6; cf. also chaps. 8, 11, 16, 17.
[3] Athenagoras, 26.
[4] Epistle to Diognetus, 8:8.
[5] Origen, Against Celsus, IV, 28.
[6] Irenæus, Against Heresies, III, preface.
[7] Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh, 9.
[8] Clement of Alexandria, Protrepticus, chap. IX, 82:2; cf. also chaps. X–XI.

These are a few of the many patristic utterances upon the subject. It is interesting to compare the words of Irenæus: "The more we contemplate God the more we love him" [1] with the statement of the eighteenth-century New England theologian, Joseph Bellamy, that the better we know God the more we hate him until we have been renewed by divine grace.[2]

In the anonymous epistle to Diognetus, which has a great deal to say about the kindness and love of God, occurs the following striking passage: "Him he sent to them. Yes, but did he send him, as a man might suppose, in tyranny and fear and terror? By no means, but in gentleness and meekness, as a king sending a son he sent him as king, he sent him as God, he sent him as man to men; to save and persuade he sent him, not to compel, for force does not belong to God. He sent him to call, not to pursue, he sent him to love, not to judge. For he will send him to judge, and who shall endure his coming?" [3] The greater part of this passage is quite in the spirit of Marcion, but it closes with a reference to Christ as judge so abrupt as to seem like the insertion of another hand.

In this connection it may not be out of place to say a few words about the imitation of God, a good Jewish conception, which is referred to

[1] Against Heresies, IV, 12: 2.
[2] Cf. True Religion Delineated: Discourse I, Section 1.
[3] Epistle to Diognetus, chap. 7.

in the tenth chapter of the epistle to Diognetus, and in the writings of some of the other fathers, and which throws a welcome light upon their interpretation of God's character. In my first lecture I spoke of Paul's use of the phrase, "imitators of God" (Eph. 5 : 1), which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. The idea of the imitation of God, though not the phrase, is found in Matt. 5 : 48 (and the parallel passage in Luke 6 : 35–36), where the imitation consists particularly in love for one's enemies and in kindness toward the unthankful. Similarly the imitation of God to which Paul refers consists in kindness, forgiveness, and love. Ignatius speaks of "imitators of God" a couple of times without indicating clearly in what they imitated him,[1] but in his epistle to the Philadelphians, chapter 7, where he exhorts his readers to be "imitators of Jesus Christ as he was of his Father," it is of fostering unity and avoiding divisions that he is thinking. Justin Martyr refers to those who imitate the excellences of God, namely his temperance, justice, and benignity.[2] In the passage in the epistle to Diognetus, already mentioned, it is said that not he who lords it over his neighbors or has wealth and power, but he who bears another's burden and helps and ministers to those in need is an imi-

[1] Eph. 1; Trall., 1; cf. also Clement, Stromata, IV, chap. XXVI, 171; VI, chap. XIV, 114.

[2] Apology, I, 10; cf. also Apology, I, 15 and II, 4.

tator of God. Clement of Alexandria puts the imitation of God in freedom from passion, the peculiar virtue of the Gnostic, in the forgiveness of injuries and in kindness.[1] Elsewhere he speaks of imitating Christ, who imitated God in righteousness, holiness, and wisdom.[2] Minucius Felix says that man imitates God in the use of reason.[3] According to Origen, Jesus taught men to live a life resembling that of God in its contempt for the life followed by the multitude,[4] a very characteristic interpretation of godlike living. Cyprian, on the other hand, quoting from the fifth chapter of Matthew, says that whoever is gentle and patient and kindly is an imitator of God the Father,[5] as he also is who shares his goods with the brethren.[6] It is thus evident that at any rate some of the fathers felt the influence of Christ's words about God in the Gospel passages referred to a moment ago, and interpreted the character of God in the light of Jesus' teaching concerning the duties of men.

[1] Stromata, VII, chap. XIV, 84, 85, 88.
[2] Ibid., II, chap. XXII, 136.
[3] Minucius Felix, Octavius, 17.
[4] Origen, Against Celsus, II, 45; cf. also Lactantius, On the Anger of God, 19.
[5] On the Good of Patience, 5.
[6] On Work and Alms, 25. Curiously enough, less is said in our early Christian documents about the imitation of Christ than the imitation of God, but it is referred to occasionally, as, e. g., in Phil. 2:5; 1 John 2:6; 1 Clement, 16:17; 33:8; Ignatius, Eph. 10; Romans 6; Phil. 7; Polycarp, Phil. 8:2; 10:1; Martyrdom of Polycarp, 1:2; 17:3; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, VI, chap. VI, 45:5; Cyprian, On the Vanity of Idols, 15.

As a rule, the belief in the wrath of God and in divine judgment did not interfere with the recognition of his goodness and mercy any more than it did for Jesus and Paul and the Jews in general. But Marcion, as has been already said, was unable to reconcile the two contrasting attitudes and hence separated the good from the just God. In opposition to him, some of the fathers have a good deal to say about the combination of goodness and severity, or mercy and wrath in God. The effort was to show that they were not contradictory or independent qualities, but that divine justice served divine love, and that together they made up the character of a perfect being. Thus Tertullian says emphatically: "Nothing is good which is unjust, but everything that is just is good." [1] And again: "Would you count him a good God who could make man worse by security in sin? Who is the author of good unless he who exacts it? Likewise who is a stranger to evil unless he who is its enemy? Who is its enemy but he who is its conqueror? Who is its conqueror but he who punishes it? Thus God is all good because in all things he is for the good. Thus, in short, he is omnipotent because strong both to help and to hurt." [2]

With this should be compared Origen's care-

[1] Against Marcion, II, 11.

[2] Against Marcion, II, 13; cf. also II, 23, 29; III, 34; V, 11; Apology, 40, 41; On the Resurrection of the Flesh, 14; On Modesty, 2.

ful treatment of the same topic in his De principiis. After dealing with the matter at some length he says: "By all which it is established that the God of the law and the gospels is one and the same, a just and good God, and that he confers benefits justly and punishes with kindness; since neither goodness without justice, nor justice without goodness, can display the dignity of the divine nature." [1]

Curiously enough, there is much more in the fathers about the power and majesty and creative activity of God than about his moral character, in spite of their frequent references, on the one hand, to the divine judgment, and on the other hand to God's goodness and mercy.[2] Upon his character they seem to have reflected only as a consequence of Marcion's teaching, and the picture they drew of God was consequently determined largely by the contrast between justice and goodness. Christian theism has not yet recovered from the effects of this situation.

As has been already seen, Christ was recognized by many of the early Christians as creator, and at least by some of them as providen-

[1] De principiis, II, 5:3; cf. also Irenæus, III, 25:2; and Cyprian, On the Lapsed, 35. In his desire to vindicate the goodness of God, Clement of Alexandria insisted that divine punishment is always disciplinary only, not retributive (cf. Pædagogus, I, 8; and Stromata, VII, chap. XVI, 102:5).

[2] It is interesting to notice that in the Clementine Homilies Peter is represented as saying he would worship the creator even if he were evil (XVIII, 22).

tial ruler as well. Similarly he was also recognized as judge of the world.[1] Sometimes God was spoken of as judge, sometimes Christ, and sometimes they were explicitly associated in the exercise of judgment, as, for instance, in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 2 : 16: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel, through Jesus Christ"; in Acts 17 : 31: "Inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained"; and in Justin's Dialogue, 58: "The judgment which God the maker of all things shall hold through my Lord Jesus Christ." [2]

According to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus announced that the Son of Man would return as judge, but the announcement is hardly to be traced back to Jesus himself. By the Jews the judgment was commonly ascribed to God, not to the Messiah, but in the visions of the Book of Enoch, the Messiah appears as judge, and this suggests that the early Christians may possibly have got their belief that Christ was to act as judge from the Jews. But, even if that were so—and it seems to me extremely improbable—at any rate the mention of Christ's com-

[1] E. g., John 5 : 22; Acts 10 : 42; 2 Cor. 5 : 10; 2 Tim. 4 : 1; Barnabas 5 : 7; 7 : 2; 15 : 5; Polycarp, 2 : 6; 2 Clement, 1 : 1; Justin, Apology, I, 8, 53; Dialogue, 36, etc. Epistle to Diognetus, 7 : 6; Irenæus, III, 12 : 13; IV, 28 : 1; Tertullian, Apology, 23; Cyprian, Ep. 64 : 2. Cf. also the article on judgment in the old Roman Symbol.

[2] See my Apostles' Creed, p. 142.

ing to judge the quick and the dead in the old Roman Symbol certainly had a polemic purpose and was not simply traditional.[1] And the same is probably true in other cases as well, the desire being to associate Christ with God in opposition to those who separated the two or were interested in Christ alone and not in God.

Had it not been for this desire we can hardly believe that Christians would have made the Saviour Christ also a judge, even if there were early authority for doing so, for they were able to disregard such authority when it seemed desirable, as our sources abundantly show. It might fairly have been expected that if a divine judgment were required, it would be ascribed to God rather than to the Saviour Christ, and that the latter would be thought of as a being of pure love and mercy, as he was by Marcion. But, on the contrary, both he and God were associated in the work of judgment.[2] It is easy to understand why this should have been done in opposition to Marcion, as it was, for instance, by Tertullian; but the same thing was done even before Marcion appeared upon the scene, and this suggests again that his attitude was not original with himself, but that from the very beginning there were Christians that

[1] See my Apostles' Creed, pp. 143 ff.

[2] It is interesting that the wrath of the Lamb is referred to in Rev. 6: 16.

thought of Christ, as he did, as a saviour only, not a judge. At an early day, however, in spite of Paul's doctrine of Christian liberty, it was widely recognized as necessary, if Christians were to be kept decent, that divine judgment should be insisted upon, as it was by Paul himself.

Thus there was an additional reason, an ethical reason, for bringing Christianity into a larger setting and linking it up with the God of Israel, the God of all the earth. Unless there were a divine judgment for sin, Christians would not live as they ought to live. But this demanded the reading of Christianity in other terms than those of salvation merely. It must be a religion of punishment as well as of redemption. In his work against Marcion, as already said, Tertullian is tireless in insisting upon the union of justice and goodness in God. The God of the Christians is at once a God of mercy and of wrath, a God who saves and condemns. To count Christ a saviour only and to contrast his character and functions with those of the God of judgment must therefore make the union between him and God incomplete, and must inevitably threaten the falling apart again of the religion of salvation and the religion of judgment, as they actually did fall apart in Marcion's hands. As Tertullian puts it again: "But since both the attributes of goodness and of justice make up the proper fulness of the divinity

as omnipotent, I have been able meanwhile with a brief compend to refute the Antitheses, which take pleasure in drawing distinctions among his qualities and characteristics, whether shown in his laws or his works, and thus separate Christ from the creator, the mild from the cruel, and him who saves from him who destroys." [1]

Nothing less than a complete oneness of Christ and God would do. If God was creator and ruler and judge of the world Christ must be too. If God was just and stern, kind and merciful, Christ must be the same. Thus a perfect union was achieved, and the dualism in the character of the Jewish God, which Marcion found intolerable, was carried over to the Christian God and even to Christ himself. Christianity ceased to be a mere religion of salvation—a mere saving cult—and Christ ceased to be a mere saviour. He was the creator, ruler, and judge of all the earth. This is really a very remarkable fact, not adequately accounted for in my opinion by the influence of Jewish tradition. I see no satisfactory explanation of it except the one I have suggested, the desire to associate Christ with God in all the divine activities, and thus to make the connection between the two as close as possible.

And yet even so there was a distinction be-

[1] Against Marcion, II, 29. The Antitheses was the title of a work by Marcion, no longer extant.

tween Christ and the Father, who was also creator, ruler, and judge of all the earth. Philosophy made it impossible to suppose with the Modalists that the Father had appeared upon earth and suffered and died, and so the two—Father and Son—were distinguished the one from the other. The distinction, however, was only formal. The real God of the theologians, as well as of the rank and file, was the Lord Jesus Christ. Modalism was, in fact, victorious, though it was condemned as a heresy. For when it was recognized that salvation was not enough, and Christianity was given a God of creation, of providence, and of judgment, instead of leaving those functions to the God to whom they naturally belonged, they were attributed also to Christ, who thus became the Father's double, distinct from him only in name.

Thus monotheism was saved, which threatened to fall apart when the Saviour Christ was brought into association with God the creator of the world. It was saved because the two—saviour and creator—were so identified that they were not two but one. Had Christ remained only a saviour while Christianity was made more than a religion of salvation, the new faith would have had two gods instead of one. This was prevented not by any new doctrine of the Trinity, with its formula of three persons in one substance, but by the ascription to the Saviour Christ of all the functions that the religion of

creation and of judgment demanded of its God.

In spite of all the distinctions drawn by the theologians in the effort to avoid philosophical absurdities, the Lord Jesus Christ remained the real God of Gentile Christendom, except for those who needed no god but a philosophical god, or those who, like the great Augustine, found their God before they found Christ.

Let me conclude this course of lectures on the God of the early Christians with a few brief paragraphs by way of summary.

The God of Jesus was the God of the Jews, pure and simple, with the emphasis laid, as by Amos, upon moral reformation and moral judgment, but with the gospel of the kingdom irradiated by the intimacy and beauty of Jesus' own relation to God and by the quality of his life of service and sacrifice. Jesus remained a loyal Jew and had no thought of breaking with the faith of his fathers and founding a new religion. The step which he had failed to take was taken by the apostle Paul. In his hands the new religion became a saving cult, unlike other contemporary cults, however, in being ethicized through and through, this both because of his Judaism and also because of his own personal experience of moral defeat and then of moral victory through Christ. The God of Paul was the God of the Jews, expanded to include the divine Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord, by mysti-

cal union with whom believers are transformed from flesh into spirit and are thus saved.

On the other hand, at an early day there came into the Christian church from the Gentile world many who found in Jesus Christ their saviour, and to whom the God of the Jews—the God worshipped by both Jesus and Paul—meant nothing. This left Christianity only one of many saving cults abroad in the Roman world. To give it universal significance and guarantee its uniqueness it was brought by apologists and theologians—men of broad vision and philosophical interest—into a larger setting. Some of them maintained its historical connection with Judaism and associated Christ with the God of the Jews, the creator and ruler of the world; others read it in the light of Gnostic dualism and saw in Christ a divine saviour from a foreign and alien realm. The controversy between these two theologies resulted ultimately in the condemnation of the latter as heretical, and the God of the Jews became permanently the God of the Christians.

This, however, did not mean the displacement of the Saviour Jesus Christ—from the very beginning the divinity of the Gentile Christians—but the extension of his functions to include creation, providence, and judgment. Had it not been for philosophical difficulties, he would himself doubtless have been recognized as the one God of all the earth—as he was by

the Modalists—but philosophy made it necessary to distinguish between a god apart and aloof and a god dying and rising again for our salvation, and so the theologians, while they gave Christ all the functions of the supreme God, refrained from ascribing to the supreme God all the experiences of Christ. The association of the two was as close and the identification of the two as complete as philosophy would allow. Religion speaks in the historic doctrine of the deity of Christ; philosophy speaks in the Logos Christology which means the distinction of the Son from the Father, and that, too, even though both are declared to be equally divine.

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